

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Unite the left!

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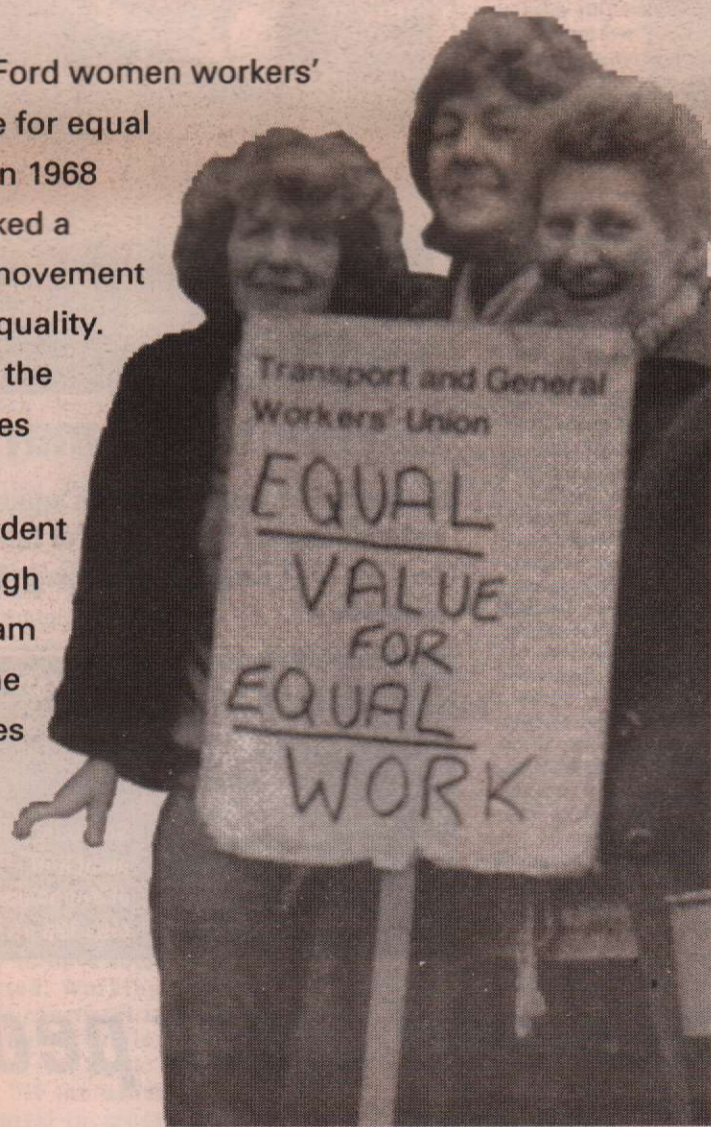


CBI SAYS EQUAL OPPS MUST GO

Bosses target

women and black people

The Ford women workers' strike for equal pay in 1968 sparked a big movement for equality. Now the bosses feel confident enough to slam on the brakes



THE REPORTED moves by the bosses' "trade union", the CBI, to abandon equal opportunities for women, black people, disabled people and others, prove once against that to the capitalist employer, people are what chicken or cattle are to the farmer.

They are there to be used, to be exploited in every way that will

make money for those who own the economy.

Fair play, human rights, appeals to a common humanity - these do not enter into the bosses' calculation unless they are forced to let them enter, under pressure of working-class action. For the rest, it is "market forces".

Continued on page 2

Don't let them divide us!

The poisoned well



Is this the Sun's retreat from Buckingham Palace? They climb down, apologise, and pay money to charity for publishing the Queen's Christmas TV message days before she delivered it. Rupert Murdoch himself is said to have told the Sun to do this. The Sun could only be even pseudo-republican, denouncing the Queen and the Royal Family, by permission of the economic king Rupert Murdoch. The Sun's writers could sound like people who really believe all citizens are equal, and resented the idea that they might not be the Queen's equals. They could sound like republicans. But then the economic king Murdoch pointed his finger, and Kelvin MacKenzie's tail dropped. They may think they are the Queen's equals, but they know that they are not the equals of the multi-millionaire US citizen Murdoch.



Though single parents often have it hard, it is difficult to feel sympathy with Yasmin Gibson, who left her 11 year old daughter on her own when she went holidaying in Spain. And yet the tabloids' brutal hounding of Gibson is surely wrong - and self-interested. They have made themselves her judge, jury and pillory operator, at the same time as publishing every tawdry "glamour" photo of her, in her capacity as actress and model, that they can lay their hands on.

South Africa: the black workers lose out

De Klerk and Mandela plan coalition

By Anne Mack

Nelson Mandela will be elected president of South Africa next year, in the country's first-ever democratic non-racial elections.

He will be head of an "interim government of national unity" involving both the African National Congress (ANC), the country's leading opposition movement, and the ruling National Party, the party which introduced, and for decades administered, the apartheid system of white minority rule.

This is not a prediction. It is a plan. The proposals for a power-sharing deal have been hammered out in recent days in secret talks between the regime and the ANC.

From what the ANC used to call "colonialism of a special type", South

Africa will be transformed into a "democracy of a special type". In return for guaranteeing white capitalist power and privilege, the black middle-class elite and ANC functionaries will be able to get into parliament.

But all the aspirations which drive the democratic demands of the vast majority will be thwarted. What hope will there be for decent housing, wages, and public services in the black townships if all the social structures of white rule are still intact?

None at all. That is the plan. Whether it can be carried through is another question.

The ANC leaders have to sell it to their supporters among the black working class and the youth.

De Klerk and Mandela have to find

some way of drawing in or at least neutralising Zulu tribal chauvinist Chief Buthelezi.

Both De Klerk and Mandela still have to sort out the thorny problem of the "specified majority" required for decisions in the future constituent assembly. Should it be 60 per cent, 70 per cent, or 80 per cent? This issue led to the breakdown of talks last year, and a mass protest stayaway general strike by the ANC and its trade union allies. It could do so again.

And what about the armed forces? Will the hated white-dominated South African Defence Force remain intact? Or will it be merged with other groups, including the ANC's armed wing, MK?

While this issue could cause a major crisis, socialists should have no illusions

in MK. Its command structures are run by people trained by the KGB and the East German Stasi. MK's "security" department, nicknamed Mbkonzo ("the boulder that crushes") became notorious after it suppressed the mutiny in the ANC's Angolan camps in 1984. It could teach even the psychopaths in the SADF's hit squads a thing or two.

On balance, the ANC/National Party deal will probably stick. Most black workers have been numbed by a decade of systematic and escalating violence in the townships, and the deal will seem to open up the prospect of an end to that.

But once Mandela is President, the aspirations of the black working-class majority will soon surface. They could well find themselves in bitter struggles against their former leaders and heroes.

Left Unity organises against NUS sell-out to Tories

Student leaders go for suicide

By Jill Mountford (Convenor, Left Unity)

The leaders of the National Union of Students (NUS) have capitulated to the Tories' plans to smash up student unionism.

But already a national campaign to "Save our Union" has been launched by activists in London, Manchester, Glasgow and Belfast.

They have called an emergency activists' conference for Wednesday 10 March, at the University of London Union, Malet Street, London. Everyone is welcome to attend. They want the biggest, broadest democratic campaign the student movement has ever seen.

On Monday, 15 February, NUS leaders called a special one day conference for student union presidents and general managers to discuss the Tories' proposals.

NUS president Lorna Fitzsimons claims to have a leaked document outlining the Government's plans (though she flatly refuses to allow anyone else to see it), and she and her friends have drafted a "consultative document" as their alternative. Unfortunately, it is more a surrender than an alternative.

And the NUS leaders are determined to ram through this surrender, whatever ordinary students feel about it: just one hour has been allocated at NUS conference this Easter to discuss what college student unions have to say about the "consultative document".

At the centre of the NUS leaders' proposals is the idea that NUS should become an organisation with "charitable status". This would make it impossible

for NUS to organise, support or call for any action deemed "political".

The NUS leaders also propose that the "charitable status of student unions should be confirmed". This, in effect, means reinforcing the "ultra vires" rules which hinder local student unions from political campaigning.

The Director of Public Prosecution is already looking into cases against three student unions for supporting lesbian and gay activities and sending coaches to miners' and anti-apartheid demonstrations. Greenwich University student union faces prosecution for anti-racist campaigning.

At the moment individuals (usually Tory students) take student unions to court over "ultra vires" activities. Now the NUS leaders are proposing that the Government get the job done more efficiently by creating Registrar of Student Unions to enforce "proper use of public funds".

In order to "clarify the areas of activity which we would expect to be retained under such status", the NUS leaders explain that "It would not be legitimate for them (SUs) to run any form of ideological based campaign". Unions would have to stop campaigning on the Child Support Act, the miners, the NHS, racism and fascism, the environment, the third world, unemployment, human rights - anything beyond issues of education policy directly affecting their students.

Then, "NUS must examine and amend its own activities and structure to ensure that it operates within the charitable environment..."

This means an end to political

campaigning by NUS, to its liberation campaigns and international campaigns, and to its campaigning Area organisations.

They also propose that students should be able to "opt out" of their college student unions. This would mean some unions closing down completely over issues on abortion rights and no platform for fascists.

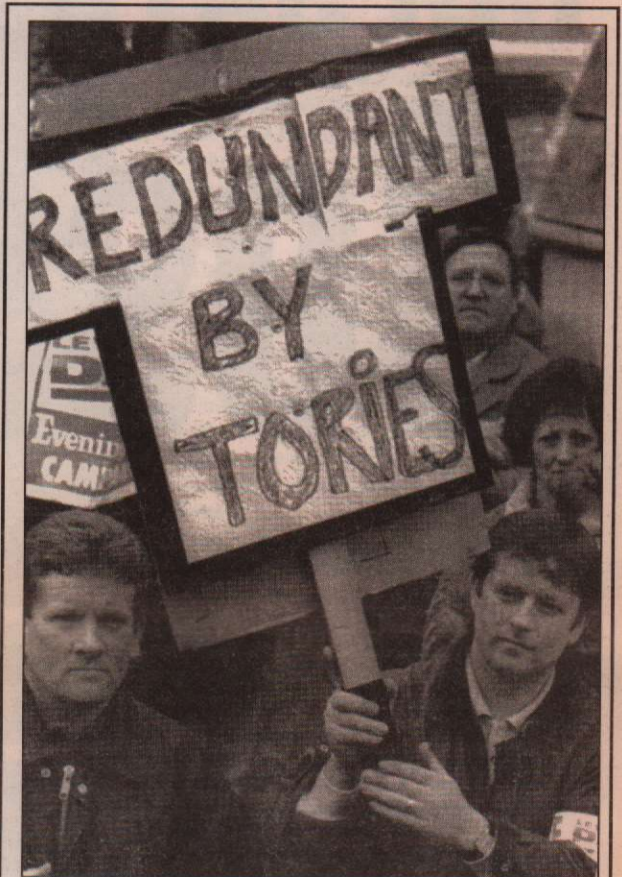
No wonder that Tory minister Tim Boswell "welcomed the NUS's recognition that reform of student unionism was needed" ("Guardian", 16 February).

For college student unions, the NUS leaders propose an end to general meetings, replacing them with union councils accountable to ordinary students only through referenda.

They advise the Tories to send in the National Audit Office to report on "the proper use and control of funds by student unions and where appropriate NUS".

Immediately activists should get hold of a copy of the "consultative document" and put together alternative proposals, to be submitted at NUS by 5 March. Emergency general meetings should be called everywhere. "Save our Union" groups should be set up in every union, preferably with the backing of the exec and sabbaticals, but unofficially if necessary.

There should be a mass lobby of Parliament early in the third term, as well as local activity. Demonstrations, occupations and lobbies of local MPs are vital. We must also consider new ways involving students who wouldn't normally get involved. Members of student unions' sports and cultural societies have to be part of this fightback



Leyland-DAF march

Leyland-DAF workers march against redundancies, 13 February. For full report of Leyland-DAF dispute turn to page 5. Photo: John Harris.

The collapse of Yugoslavia

Just published: "The destruction of Yugoslavia — tracking the break-up, 1980-92" by Branka Magas (recently featured in Socialist Organiser). Verso, 366 pp; price £12.95. Socialist Organiser pamphlet: "The Collapse of Yugoslavia" price 75p plus 18p p&p

Bosses target women and black people

From front page

THE CBI decided in the late 1980s that there would be a shortage of labour in the 1990s, and that therefore it would be in their interests to encourage more women, black people, and other disadvantaged people to enter the labour force and gain skills. They became keen on "equal opportunities". A few doors were opened. "Decent, humane, civilised employers", said their paid propagandists in the press.

Now the massive growth of unemployment has changed all that. Real unemployment is four million, and official

unemployment is set to pass the three million mark this week. Mainstream economists calculate that unemployment will be above two and half million all through the 1990s.

So who needs equal opportunities? Not the CBI. Not any more.

According to the "Independent on Sunday", a confidential report by senior CBI officials proposes that the organisation should abandon equal opportunities. "The paper argues that rising unemployment has reduced the need for employers to concern themselves with getting previously underrepresented groups into the

labour force and improving their levels of skill".

Or, as the CBI document puts it, "the business arguments for accessing and advancing previously excluded groups and for increasing training become less relevant".

And what about the human beings whose lives are thus juggled with? What about them? They are not the business of the CBI. Profit is their business.

People should be the concern of society, and of the government. But the government is the CBI's government.

The Government could not scrap the toothless equal opportunities provisions now on

the statute books without clashing with the European Community. But they are unlikely to try to twist the arm of the CBI away from scrapping any real provision for equal opportunities.

People, the unemployed, the disadvantaged, the disabled, only count with these bosses who rule and shape our lives when we make ourselves count.

All those affected should greet this CBI U-turn with an angry outcry, and with the demand for positive action by the Government to protect their interests. They should demand that the TUC and the Labour Party resist the CBI.

Unemployment is the great grim weapon in the hands of the employers and their government. It is an indictment of the official labour movement that no sustained mass campaign against unemployment has been mounted.

The CBI's talk of abandoning equal opportunities should be the signal for the beginning of such a mass campaign.

Women, black people, unemployed - united and campaign against this government and those like the CBI whose shameless servant it is!

Fight unemployment! Fight for equal opportunities!

**Cut work hours,
expand public works**

Everyone could have a job

Cut Britain's working hours to the level of Belgium's, and everyone could have a job.

Full-time workers in Britain do an average of 43.6 hours a week. It is the longest average work-week in Western Europe.

Cut the hours, and the work could be shared out to employ everyone who wants a job. If the average work-week were cut by 14 per cent, to 37.5 hours (or just slightly less than Belgium's average, 38.1 hours), then the same total amount of work would employ 14 per cent more workers (assuming that the proportion of part-timers stayed the same).

14 per cent is the real unemployment rate. According to the Government's latest figures, to be released on Thursday 18 February, it is about 10 per cent, or three million. Those rigged figures, however, are got only by defining away over a million people — married women and young people unable to get state benefits, men over 60 counted as "early retired", and others. The real figure is well over four million unemployed.

It is crazy to have some people exhausted, working long hours, while others rot in idleness. But that is the logic of capitalism. As Karl Marx explained, "If the accumulation of capital increases the demand for labour, it also increases the supply of labourers by the 'setting free' of them, whilst at the same time the pressure of the unemployed compels those that are employed to furnish more labour, and therefore makes the supply of labour, to a certain extent, independent of the supply of labourers."

"This action of the law of supply and demand of labour on this basis completes the despotism of capital".

The bosses argue that Britain

"cannot afford" a cut in the working week.

Some better-paid workers would probably be happy to trade 14 per cent less pay for another six hours of free time. Many workers, however, have no choice. They have to work all the overtime they can get to make ends meet.

A 14 per cent cut in the work week, therefore, would have to go with an increase in the total wages bill of up to 14 per cent. Impossible! Disastrous! Ruinous! say the bosses.

Yet those bosses routinely pay themselves increases of well over 14 per cent, without any worries about ruining anything.

"The best way of employing the unemployed would be a planned expansion of public works, alongside a cut in the working week."

14 per cent of the total wages bill would be about £50 billion a year. The real cost of paying 14 per cent extra wages is not as much as that, because a great deal would be saved when unemployed workers got jobs, stopped getting state benefits, and started paying taxes. It could be as low as £14 billion, even without counting the probable savings from lower rates of crime and illness.

The bosses would say that even £14 billion is too much.



Millions are condemned to poverty and enforced idleness while others work longer hours under more stressful conditions. Only the wealthiest few benefit. Photo: John Harris

There isn't that much money spare, they would say.

Spare money is not the problem. The total stock of money in cash, bank accounts, and so on, in Britain, is about £500 billion. Only about £10 billion of that is spent and passes from hand to hand each week.

Spending another £14 billion is not a problem — except that the rich people who hold that £14 billion do not want to spend it on employing the unemployed. They want to keep it instead, to increase their own wealth.

What about the real resources represented by that £14 billion of paper money? Are they in short supply?

No! Wages and "social wages" (social security and so on) get about 58 per cent of output in Britain; the wealth-owning class and the State get the other 42 per cent. Adding another £14 billion to wages would change the split from 58:42 to 61:39. Such a change would be resisted fiercely by the rich who would lose out — but it is not impossible or unimaginable or contrary to any law of nature.

Besides, to cut the working week and employ the unemployed would certainly lead to an increase in total output and thus in the resources available. Many workers, being fresher and less tired, would produce as much in 37.6 hours as they did before in 43.6 hours: increased productivity has been the result of every cut in working hours since the first

trade unions started to bring them down from 14 hours a day.

A move which started by dividing a fixed total of production among the workers available would end by increasing production, employment, and leisure, all together.

While four million people remain unemployed, there is plenty of extra work to be done.

Hospitals are overcrowded, with huge waiting lists: yet nurses and ancillary workers are on the dole. Hundreds of thousands are homeless, and tens of thousands of dwellings stand empty for lack of renovation, yet building workers are jobless. A crisis of energy sources will hit us next century, but the Government wants to shut down coal mines, abandon the coal left in them, and sack the miners.

Our environment is in danger, but Britain does almost nothing about recycling materials or improving public transport so as to limit the ecological damage from cars.

The best way of employing the unemployed would be a planned expansion of public works, alongside a cut in the working week. It can be done — but only with a determined struggle against the power and privilege of the wealthy classes.

The TUC has called a "jobs action day" on 18 February. But both its planned action and its political demands are lamentably weak.

Some local authority trade unionists will strike, but no

thanks to the TUC. The TUC's main proposals are that trade unionists should write to their MPs and "ask your employer to back a Budget for jobs".

The TUC's political demands include "a big boost to training", "decent public services and benefits", "houses for the homeless", and "more investment in transport and energy" — all positive, but vague. But it says nothing about cutting the working week.

Instead of proposing a fight against the bosses and the Tories, the TUC wants "help for manufacturing industry, including small firms". It politely asks employers to ask the Tories for a "Budget for jobs".

Trade unionists should get together at rank and file level with miners and the unemployed to launch a real campaign for jobs.

"The emancipation of the working class is also the emancipation of all human beings without distinction of sex or race."

Karl Marx

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Exploited by the bosses, patronised by the left

You may have heard about the Burnsall dispute in Smethwick. It has had quite a lot of coverage in the national press (notably the Guardian) and, unusually, the coverage has been favourable to the strikers.

All but one of them are Asian, and the majority are women. The Burnsall factory is a hell-hole: it's a metal-plating sweatshop that uses dangerous chemicals with little concern for health and safety regulations, paying lousy wages and exploiting especially vulnerable workers.

Last year, in an act of considerable courage, the Burnsall workers walked out on strike, demanding decent health and safety, improved wages, and the recognition of their union, the GMB.

The GMB leadership in the Midlands - not usually noted for its radicalism - backed the strike with a degree of reluctance. The regional leadership pointed out that the strikers had not been in membership long enough to qualify for strike pay. Nevertheless, the decision to back the strikers was made and two GMB officials were given responsibility for handling it.

The two officials happened to be the only two left-wingers on the GMB's Midlands team: the term "poisoned chalice" has been used more than once in this context.

As any other union would do these days, the GMB made it clear that the dispute must be conducted within the law: secondary action was out and picketing must stay within the law. The strikers agreed to this, and a strategy centring upon use of the Health and Safety regulations and the Industrial Tribunals was hammered out.

The plan was to clobber the employer at a series of tribunals and force him to the negotiating table - or drive him out of business. Given that the strikers were scarcely worse off on state benefit than they had been at work, this latter possibility was not altogether unattractive to the strikers.

From the outset, the Indian Workers' Association (IWA) was closely involved with the strike. The GMB made use of IWA interpreters at strike meetings, and the IWA leadership was regularly consulted on the progress of the dispute.

A rally in support of the Burnsall strikers was agreed between the GMB and the IWA - on a date decided by the IWA. In the event, the mobilisation by the IWA was disappointing to say the least.

IWA leaders suggested that the GMB's attitude towards the Tory anti-union legislation might be holding back the dispute - as though the TGWU, to which they belong, would have acted any differently.

The role of much of the organised left has been bad. The SWP ("Socialist Worker") regularly denounce the GMB for not organising boycotts of Burnsall products at car factories. These r.r..revolutionaries fail to mention that the main organised recipient of Burnsall material is Jaguar in Coventry. The same issue of "Socialist Worker" that attacked the GMB over boycotts also carried an article describing how resistance to redundancies and a fight for a pay claim had failed at Jaguar because of shop-floor demoralisation. The Burnsall question was not mentioned in the Jaguar article.

Now a "support committee" has been established, made up of assorted lefties. Their aim is unclear. But support in the sense of fund-raising does not appear to be high on their agenda. Conning the strikes into believing that they can take on the Tory anti-union laws and win single-handedly.

The "support committee" is being egged on by a researcher for Channel 4 television who has a long record of patronising workers in struggle. No-one in the "support committee" has yet come up with a coherent alternative strategy to the GMB's. The best you get is an abstract call to "defy the law". What the committee has succeeded in doing is driving a quite unnecessary wedge between the strikers and the officials.

If all this sounds pessimistic, it should be noted that there have also been some very encouraging developments, giving cause to hope that a satisfactory outcome may soon be achieved. But that will be no thanks to the antics of certain left-wingers.

Sometimes people on the left seem determined to live up to all the worst stereotypes that the bureaucrats and the right wing put out about a

INSIDE THE UNIONS



By Sleeper

Mark Serwotka for

"I'm the only candidate who wants to see a national fightback"

MARK Serwotka, Alliance for Workers' Liberty supporter, longstanding CPSA activist, and a member of the union's DHSS Section Executive, is standing for National President of the civil service union CPSA. Mark is the only candidate in the election with a history of leading serious struggles against Civil Service management and winning.

He is also the only candidate who knows what it's like working on the counter of a local DSS office, where CPSA members have to face the understandable anger and frustration of claimants who fall victim to the appalling state of the benefits system in Tory Britain.

Mark is one of the many CPSA activists who have taken a brave stand in the face of management intimidation for not wearing John Major's bright idea, the ridiculous name badge.

These make ordinary workers responsible in the eyes of claimants for the faults of a system they do not control.

We talked to Mark about his reasons for standing and the aims of his campaign.

Why are you standing?

WE WANT to give the members a real choice. The big issue facing the union is Market Testing: the contracting out of Civil Service jobs to private contractors.

If it goes through, its effects will be devastating. Yet none of the other candidates - Albert Astbury, John Moffat, and Marion Chambers - have anything clear to say about how to stop it.

All of them say they agree with the policy passed at last year's union conference. (Even the Moderate candidate, Marion Chambers, gave it qualified support!)

That would be okay if the policy was half-way adequate. But it isn't. The resolution was just a set of fine sounding but ultimately meaningless phrases that can be interpreted however you like.

No-one seems to be prepared to learn the lessons from the experience of manual workers in local government and the NHS.

They tried to fight contracting-out one group at a time. And they went down

to defeat one group at a time.

We can't afford to repeat this experience.

So I'm standing on one very simple principle. We've got to fight Market Testing and all the other Tory attacks with every means at our disposal up to and including properly co-ordinated mass national strike action.

I'm the only candidate who wants to see a national fightback.

What kind of fightback? What are the issues that you want to raise?

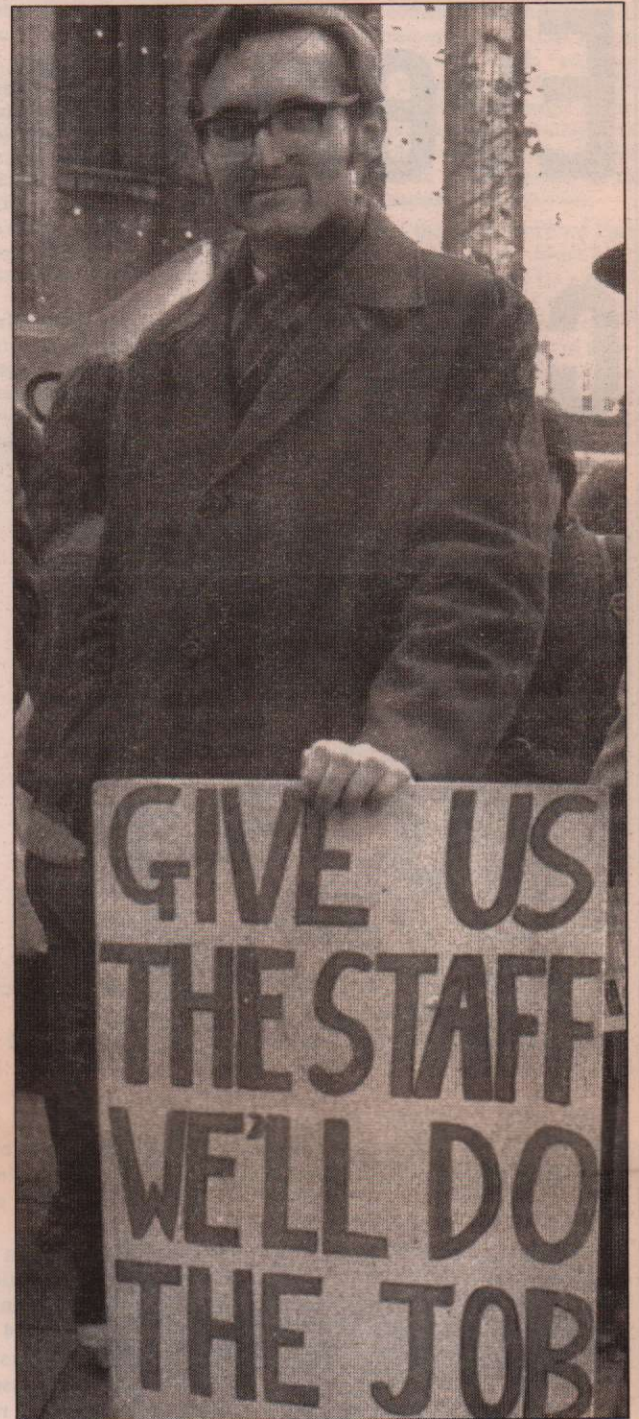
BESIDES Market Testing I think the key issues are the pay freeze, the end of national bargaining, name badges, staffing levels, trade union democracy and of course solidarity in action with other workers in struggle, with the miners.

Anyone can say they "support" other workers fighting the pay freeze. All you've got to do is send a letter! But that type of support isn't good enough. If you are standing for a responsible union position you've got to give a lead.

You've got to say we will do such and such. For instance, I think CPSA should be balloting for strike action alongside the rail unions and the NUM on the issue of the pay freeze and market testing. I think any self-respecting trade unionist, who wants to defend ordinary members, would have to say that.

But you won't find anything like that in the statements of any of the other candidates. It's all vague. All waffle. Nothing definite. Just words like "oppose" and "support". Even the supposedly far left 'Militant' are opposed to even raising the question of strike action in the CPSA these days over big national questions - like last year's rotten pay deal, which was in effect a pay cut.

They must think the members are as naive as they are. How are you going to force management to up an offer other than by threatening them with strike action and being prepared to carry out that threat?



Instead of providing adequate resources, the Tories plan to bash public service workers with "market testing". Photo: John Harris

Anything else just isn't serious. If you try and dodge the issue ordinary members will just think you are shifty.

Which gets back to my main point. If the left is going to win in CPSA, then it has to offer people an alternative vision. It has to inspire people. It has to tell them that these are issues worth fight over and that they can win.

In the DSS offices, people are really starting to feel the pressure of the massive increases in unemployment. DSS frontline workers are over stretched and the offices are under-staffed.

If the left in the union was doing its job properly it would be taking up issues like that and using members' day to day experience as the basis for a campaign to change the union and drive out the existing moderate leadership.

I've been involved in four staffing disputes in Wales. The experience helped us build strong branches and made sure that the moderates get a derisory vote in DSS Wales.

That's how you turn things round. You don't do

it by saying that the thing for the members to do is vote for somebody whose main vote winning characteristic seems to be he is not Marion Chambers.

You mean Albert Astbury?

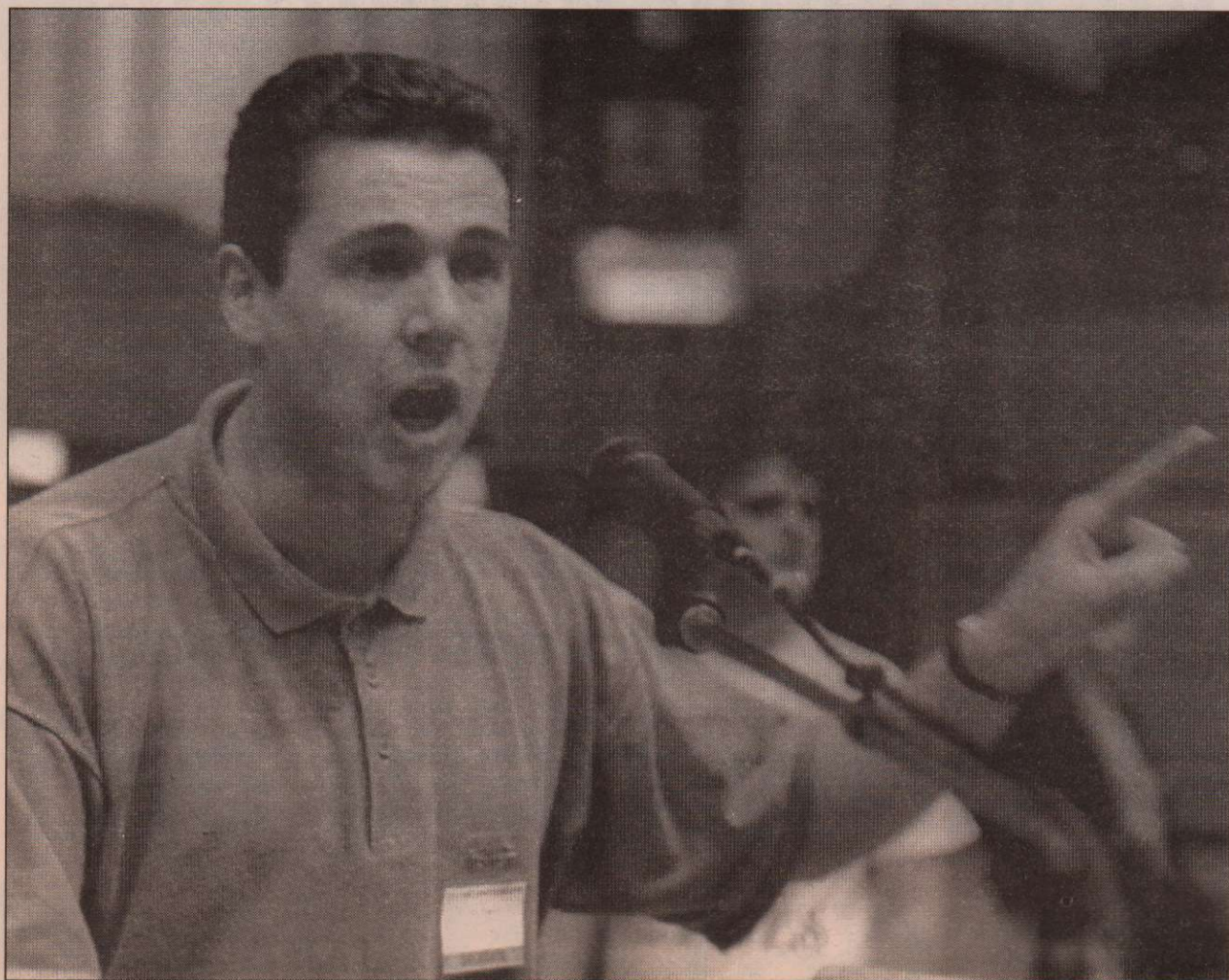
YES. Militant pushed support for independent Albert Astbury through Broad Left Conference. They say that all the left must unite to defeat the Moderates and getting agreement on a joint Presidential candidate with the soft left in BL84 is a big step forward.

Of course we want to see the Moderates defeated. The question is how.

The people who are supporting my candidature (members of the Broad Left, the Socialist Caucus and many non-aligned left wing activists) believed in the old fashioned idea that you build unity through struggle. That's the way to capture the imagination of the members and drive out the Moderates.

After all, that's also what happened in 1987, the last

CPSA President!



Mark Serwotka — left candidate against three “moderates”

time the Broad Left won the NEC — in the wake of a pay campaign that mobilised the members.

Albert Astbury should be called the stitch-up candidate, not the unity candidate.

His “policy statement” was designed to allow Militant and the soft-left to get together on the basis of the soft left’s policies. For instance it is conveniently vague about things like Market Testing so as to paper over the fundamental difference of principle between people like BL84 who are pledged to live with it and others who are not. I don’t think Militant know exactly where they stand on the issue.

Astbury is a high level (Grade 7) manager — equivalent to a DSS District Manager — and he’s never led any kind of serious struggles.

Despite this he’s a nice enough bloke at a personal level. It’s just that the Moderates are going to crucify him in the election.

Why is that?

YOU SEE, ordinary members don’t like Grade 7s. And the Moderates will just go mad about the issue. It’s bound to backfire and discredit everyone on the left.

Anyway the stitch-up has already unwound. The right wing of the “soft left” (BL84) have decided to stand their own candidate, John Moffat. Which just shows you how daft all this

“unity but never mind the members” stuff is.

You can’t treat the members like sheep. They deserve a chance to vote for policies that are in their interests. The left in the union should stop and think about why we haven’t beaten the Moderates.

So how do we beat the Moderates?

LIKE I SAID, you’ve got to give people something worth fighting for. You’ve got to give people a vision of a union that will really fight for their interests.

For instance, I’ve argued for the annual election of all union officials for over a decade now. I have never come across an audience of ordinary members who don’t think that it is the obvious democratic thing to do. Ordinary members think that union leaders should be accountable.

But the Militant leadership of the “Broad Left” never fights on this issue.

Instead they have argued for Presidential elections every 5 years.

It is not enough to just say “Kick out Chambers”, you’ve got change the entire union from top to bottom. You’ve got to really fight for control over the leadership in the branches at the rank and file level. We’ve got to have a policy for rebuilding the union from ground up.

That is the way to deal

with the question of leadership.

The members desperately want a lead. They are feeling the pressure of unemployment and the anti-union laws and they can see an increasingly vindictive management. They are looking for a serious national lead from the representatives of their unions.

You are not going to relate to that mood by messing around with no-hope candidates and meaningless programmes.

You’ve got to convince people that you are deadly serious about changing the union root and branch.

If my campaign helps open up the union and increases the support of the serious left, who really want to fight, then it will have been a success.

Militant supporters open the door for the right wing

Some Militant supporters in the DSS are not nominating Broad Left member Mark Serwotka in a head-to-head contest against right wing Charter Group supporter Christine Galligan for a DSS Section officer position. This will only help the right wing.

Mark on the other hand is arguing for a vote for all Broad Left candidates who are accountable to the Broad Left, including all Militant supporters!

Astbury is not a Broad Left candidate. He is not accountable to anybody and has no chance of victory!

Militant supporters should calm down and get some sense of perspective. If they don’t it will be Militant and Militant alone who will be helping the right wing!

Why I’m backing Mark Serwotka

Mick Loates, CPSA LCD South East Regional Council Secretary and LCD Broad Left, explains why he is backing Mark Serwotka

I think voting for Mark will help build a united leadership in CPSA. The way the Moderates are running the union is a disaster. We need a policy for rebuilding the union from ground up.

the two factions, Militant and Broad Left ‘84.

By supporting Mark we will be making serious fighting unity more possible not less.

Mark is picking up a lot of support from LCD branches. We know from experience where Albert Astbury stands. It was clear to us when he was LCD Secretary that he had moderate policies and was prepared to discuss them with the rank and file.

Dirty deals at DAF

By Jim Denham

A 600-strong demonstration and rally in Birmingham last Saturday, 13 February, was a clear indication of the potential for a fight against redundancies at Leyland DAF.

Called at short notice by the TGWU Automotive District Committee, the demo was largely made up of workers from the DAF Birmingham Washwood Heath plant and their families. The anger and militancy of the workers were self-evident: what was lacking was any strategy for resistance.

Indeed, most of the demonstrators had little idea of what was going on behind the scenes. It was also noticeable that the engineering union AEEU had little more than a token presence, and that the Washwood Heath plant union leadership was conspicuous by its absence.

“The redundancies were made using the so-called ‘matrix’ method”

The previous day, 589 Birmingham workers — together with 768 at Leyland (Lancashire), 130 at Chorley, 75 at Oxford, and 67 at Glasgow — had been given their redundancy notices. Many of them are workers with decades of service, who will now get only the statutory minimum redundancy pay — less than half of what they would have received under the company’s redundancy agreement.

The redundancies were made using the so-called “matrix” method, allowing management to pick and choose on the basis of such criteria as “attitude”, dispensing with any consideration of length of service.

Feeling inside the plant had been moving in favour of action, and the result of a strike ballot should have been announced on Friday 12th. However, the announcement was not made until Monday 15th. The TGWU (as well as the AEEU and the right-wing plant leadership) have accepted the fact that the redundancies were made using the “matrix” method.

the plant leadership now wants to squash any suggestion of industrial action. The AEEU national leadership has endorsed this move; the role of the TGWU leadership is not clear. Production workers at Leyland, Lancashire, voted against action, but the Glasgow Albion plant backed a strike.

What lies behind all the confusion is a possible deal between the receivers (who are running the company since it went bankrupt), Washwood Heath managing director Allan Amey, and at least some union representatives, for a management buyout.

This would account for the following statement (to the “Birmingham Post”) from convenor Dickie Gould: “I can’t honestly say that it [the redundancies] was uncalled for. We just don’t have the production to carry on with that level of manpower... We hope that this is the one and only set of redundancies. I think they have decided to get the manning level down to a point which which can run through 1993”.

Meanwhile, the unions at Leyland and Chorley seem to have pinned their hopes on moves backed by the Dutch government to create a new truck operation, “New Daf”. Whether or not these backroom deals come to fruition, the 1635 Leyland DAF workers who were sacked last week have been deserted by their union “leaders”.

It is probably true — as the Washwood Heath plant leadership and the AEEU say — that a strike would be counter-productive at the moment. But if all Leyland DAF workers turned up for work this week, management would then have to decide whether or not to let those selected for redundancy clock in. Refusal could be answered by factory occupations.

Such a call could have been by the TGWU “left” leaders (including Deputy General Secretary Jack Adams) at Saturday’s rally. But it wasn’t — confirming the suspicion that the TGWU (as well as the AEEU and the right-wing plant leadership) have accepted the fact that the redundancies were made using the “matrix” method.

GRAFFITI

And room to spare

GRAFFITI

SO THE CULTURAL high point of the year is now over. The TV dramatisation of "Diana: Her True Story" has been screened on Sky.

The story involves a simple girl called Cinders, an innocent if not naive soul, the kind who couldn't even imagine planting stories in the press. Her one simple ambition is to be Queen of a small, unimportant state, preferably with a fair-sized Commonwealth.

But she discovers too late that the Prince she has married not only believes that "...rhubarb is one of the few plants that needs a good talking to", but is also having a long-running affair with his polo pony.

Cinders is played by ex-model Serena Scott-Thomas, who describes the story as "really thought-provoking". Serena took her role very seriously.

"I really got inside Diana's head", she claimed. That doesn't sound too difficult. You could probably fit someone else into the rest of the spare room if you tried.

COMING SOON to your TV screen, Channel 4's new one-off game show, "Come on down and out".

This will give the homeless their first game show, the winner being awarded a luxury home. The rest of the contestants presumably take their souvenir T-shirts back to their hostels, bed-and-breakfasts, and shop doorways.

Next week: watch for Celebrity Kidney - in which the lucky winner gets exclusive treatment on the NHS's only spare dialysis machine

THE LATEST executive fad is for "outdoor survival" management training weekends that teach initiative, self-discipline, and all-important "leadership qualities". Tough military exercises are all the rage.

They certainly did for the late Geoffrey Ledgard, who ended up a little more than short of breath during one such course.

Maybe other bosses should follow this successful programme of self-improvement.

IN 1943 Stalin decided that the USSR needed a national anthem. Since 1917 they had had to scrape by with the Internationale, the hymn to the unity of the workers of all countries.

With the Great Patriotic War against the Germans and "socialism in one country" well under way, Stalin wanted something more in the "Rule Britannia" league. So he commissioned a young writer, Sergei Mikhailov, to come up with "Unbreakable union of the freeborn nations/ Great Russia has welded forever to stand..."

Now the new Russian authorities need a new anthem. To usher in the new era, they have found someone to head the committee to select the new words - Sergei Mikhailov.

Although Mikhailov was in the CP until its dissolution in 1991, he claims, "I was never a communist. Just a party member". There's a lot of it around in the new Russia.

HERE'S YOUR chance to enter our "Is Martin Jacques a Tory?" competition.

All you have to do is read the following quotation from Britain's leading self-important ex-Stalinist intellectual, from this week's "Sunday Times".

"Radicalism is on the life support machine. Michael Portillo is trying to keep it alive", he writes, before going on to praise the radicalism of workfare and toll roads, but reject the radicalism of the "pragmatic" Major as pale in comparison to Thatcher's.

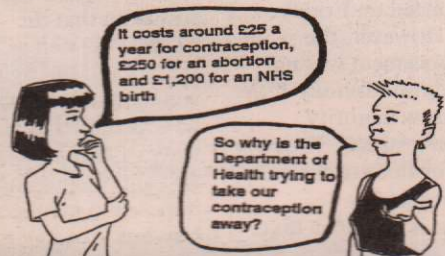
Is Jacques a Tory? Answers to the "Spot the Tory" competition at the usual address. A Martin Jacques think-alike lobotomy kit to the first correct answer.

THE GOOD NEWS for New Men: the men's toilets at Sheffield Crucible theatre now have nappy-changing facilities, as well as the women's toilets.

The bad news: as far as your intrepid Socialist Organiser reporter could tell from the bin by the men's facilities, they have not been used for quite some time.

WHEN the old-style Communist "Morning Star" headlines a feature on workfare, "About as fair as the labour camps", it does raise one or two questions. Is this just journalistic hyperbole, or an attempt to rehabilitate Stalin?

It would carry more credibility if the Star's forerunner, the "Daily Worker", had dared to criticise Stalin's "Employment Training Schemes" at the time when they enslaved tens of millions of people.



Murdoch becomes a born-again monarchist

PRESS GANG



By Jim Denham

DO YOU remember when, a few years ago, Mr Rupert Murdoch announced that he had found the Lord? From then on, we were promised, the Digger would walk the path of righteousness, smiting sinners and generally doing the Lord's Work. Strangely, this new-found godliness had no noticeable effect upon the Murdoch media empire, which continued to churn out its accustomed diet of soft pornography, sexual revelations and smutty innuendo.

Now, it seems, Mr Murdoch has undergone another dramatic conversion: he's become a monarchist. The suspicion of closet republicanism has followed Murdoch throughout his career.

Last summer when the Sun published the "Squidgygate" tapes and the Sunday Times serialised "Diana — Her True Story", the rumours became public accusations. Murdoch's mouthpiece Andrew Knight vigorously championed the Digger's monarchist credentials, but when the Queen gave her "annus horribilis" speech, the Sun gleefully dubbed itself "Newspaper of the Annus".

Last Thursday the Queen hit back, slapping a writ on the Sun for breach of copyright over the premature publication of her Christmas message. The Sun's initial reaction was characteristically cocky: "We don't consider we did anything wrong. It was a good old-fashioned journalistic scoop, nothing more... We reckon we already pay enough taxes to keep Her Majesty in the style to which she has become accustomed".

The fighting talk continued for several days: "Her Majesty has set her regal legal eagles on Britain's favourite paper. She is trying to make a few sovereigns out of us", complained Saturday's self-proclaimed "Sun-nus Horribilis".

But the next day's Sunday Times editorial (always a sure guide to the Digger's innermost thinking) was strongly conciliatory towards the royals: "The Monarchy as an institution remains central to the British constitution. Its well-being concerns us all. The days of fawning deference are thankfully over, but the monarchy's ability to command respect still matters... The British royal house is unique in its history, its scale of operations and its international status and responsibilities..."

Ho hum. What's going on here? The editorial raised a few passing reservations about the "need for greater openness in the dealings between the sovereign and her people" and went on to question some details of the new tax deal (like the Queen's apparent exemption from inheritance tax). But the tone was respectful. One might even say deferential. Could this possibly be the Wapping equivalent of an olive branch?

Monday's Sun front page gave us the answer: "Ma'am, last week you proved you are in touch with ordinary people by agreeing to pay income tax. No small thing. You have responded to public opinion and we applaud you. So the Sun is making a gesture of its own. We accept that, unintentionally, we caused you personal offence... So the Sun will donate £200,000 to Princess Anne's Save the Children Fund". This was probably the nearest that Kelvin MacKenzie has ever come to grovelling. Mr MacKenzie was unavailable for comment, but assistant editor Chris Davis made it clear where the instructions had come from: "It is Rupert Murdoch who feels we should make this handsome and gracious gesture".

The Digger's "republicanism" (if indeed it ever really was that — more likely it reflected a sort of Thatcherite hostility to any institution that remained untouched by the free market) turned out to come cheap. A few cosmetic concessions on income tax was all it took. I don't know about you, but I feel a certain sense of betrayal.

How the sweatshops were organised

WOMEN'S EYE



By Jean Lane

THOUSANDS of women in Britain today are home workers. They work incredibly long hours for a pittance, usually on a piecework basis.

They are very hard to organise, partly because they are isolated in their homes, but also because they are usually at the mercy of middlemen who have the power to decide whether they get work or not.

A hundred years ago, some 13,000 women in Liverpool worked in the clothing industry, at home or in sweatshops, and the story of how they organised has a lot to teach us today.

The women laboured as

tailoresses, coatmakers, dressmakers, and makers of moleskin trousers. It was highly skilled work, to produce garments which brought high prices in the shops.

But the large clothing shops put their work out to "sweaters", middlemen who ran workshops in filthy tenements, hidden from factory inspectors. They extracted the maximum work from the women for the minimum of wages, employing the women on a casual basis and discharging them when each batch of work was finished.

Since the main employer of men in Liverpool was the docks, employing them on a daily or half-daily basis, many workers lived literally hand to mouth.

Most women earned as little as six shillings a week, and never more than 10 shillings. 15 shillings was considered the minimum necessary for survival.

When there was work, the women in the sweatshops did a 16 hour day. But for the outworkers, working at home, conditions were still worse. They tended to work together to cut down the cost of sewing machines, and because they had to pay a deposit of £5 before they could get the work. Yet two women working a 12 hour

day could not earn as much as 7s 6d between them. The children were often brought in to help.

Many attempts in the 1880s to organise these

"Homeworkers are very hard to organise, because they are isolated and at the mercy of middlemen"

women had failed, but by 1890 the Liverpool Tailoresses' and Coatmakers' Union had recruited 300 members. In June 1890 they called a strike to reduce their long hours of work.

Three months previously, the great dock strike had seen demonstrations of 50,000 in the streets of Liverpool. The women's strike was very small in comparison, and small in relation to the number of women in the clothing industry, but the trade union had enough support among the women who

worked under the sweaters to force negotiations.

Some workshops brought in scab male labour from Manchester, but by the second week of the strike some others had conceded the women's terms: a working day of 9am to 7pm. Support was also growing among men in the trade.

The Liverpool Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors sent a resolution of support and £12 towards the strike fund (equivalent to about £400 today). The Manchester Jewish Machinists, Tailors, and Pressers Union promised that "we shall not go to Liverpool to injure the tailoresses now on strike".

By the end of the third week of the strike, three of the major firms and some of the smaller ones had agreed to the women's terms. The working day was reduced to 9am to 7pm with no loss of pay, and many of the large firms abolished their middle men and began to employ women directly on their own premises.

The women thus played an important part in the general working-class struggle for the eight-hour day.

Facts and figures from the North West Labour History Society Bulletin, no.7, 1980-1.



Frank Critchlow's Mangrove restaurant in Notting Hill has been the centre of many battles against police racism.

Frank Critchlow tells how he beat London's new top cop

The man who beat the rap

Frank Critchlow is a man who knows all about the new Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Paul Condon. The 36 police officers who testified against Frank at his last trial were under Condon's command.

Condon was responsible for "Operation Trident" designed to "clean up drug dealing" in Notting Hill, West London. In 1988, the Mangrove restaurant was raided and Frank was charged with dealing in heroin.

The jury believed Frank rather than the police and in October 1992 he was awarded £50,000 damages. It was Frank's third major trial in twenty years.

Frank Critchlow first made the national news as a defendant in the "Mangrove Nine" trial.

The Mangrove Nine — who also included Darcus Howe — beat riot and affray charges in 1971. There real crime was to have demonstrated against police harassment.

Frank talked to Socialist Organiser about his life and struggle.

IT SEEMS LIKE I've been arrested, with a major trial, every ten years. 1960s, '70s, '80s: they were hell!

I opened the Rio coffee bar in 1959. Those were early days in

Britain. People were still coming across in boats. 300, 400, 1,000 people were coming over at a time. The first thing people wanted to know was: where's Harry? John? Cousin James? People used to come to Paddington Station and then to the Rio.

The Rio was a coffee shop but it rapidly became a community centre. People from Jamaica, Trinidad and Antigua met and made friends. This was at a time when there was nowhere for us to go, no outlet. And the Rio became popular overnight.

The Notting Hill police started to get worried. They did not know how to handle us. The West Indians did not know what to do if they were stopped and the police made some silly charge.

There was a problem. And that's when I got interested. We set up an organisation called *Defence*. That was in the early 1960s. Colin McInnes, the author, was involved.

Colin used to bring people in. Christine Keeler, Stephen Ward, John Profumo and Mandy Rice Davies used to go to the Rio. Musicians dropped in after they finished playing. It was the 'in' place.

The racist police said that black

men were living off immoral earnings. It was a silly charge, which they would drop later. They used it against the trendy young men who were around the clubs with young women. We got lawyers and helped out.

That is how it started. We did this right through the 1960s.

Then I came to All Saints Road and opened up the Mangrove restaurant. The Mangrove was raided by the police six times in one year. They said that they had information that there were drugs, although they never found any.

"Drugs" was an excuse. What the police really wanted was to close the Mangrove down.

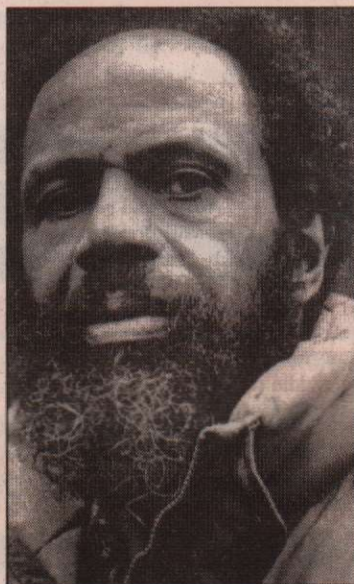
The Mangrove itself was very popular. Bruce Douglas-Mann MP, Tony Gifford, Robin and Mary Tuck used to live in the area and come and eat at the Mangrove. I was backed up by such people when I complained about the police raids.

In the end we decided to organise a demonstration. Lord Gifford sat here when we discussed it. Darcus Howe, I think, suggested I might lose everything if we called a demonstration. I said we should do it anyway.

The demonstration was about 500 strong and started from All Saints Road. We were shouting, with banners and everything — it was a wicked demonstration.

In Portnall Road, an area where a lot of black people lived, we had trouble from the police. They arrested quite a few people on small charges, threatening behaviour, offensive weapons, things like that. Some got off, some did not.

But, on the Monday after the demonstration, the London *Evening Standard* carried a story saying that Home Secretary Maudling wanted an investigation



Frank Critchlow

into "black power" in Britain.

This was their response to our march. Do not forget that this was the first demonstration of its kind — against police harassment of black people.

Next thing, nine of us got arrested. They were serious charges — they gave us the lot. They wanted to stamp us out and deter anyone else. But it backfired because we fought back politically.

The judge tried to tell people that this was not a political trial. But they lost and we won. We came back to the Mangrove and had a celebration.

That was 1971. And that is the point when the pressure *really* started on me. The Mangrove Nine went their different ways, but I stayed in Notting Hill.

After the trial the restaurant did not work. I could not get the *feel* of the old Mangrove back.

We put in a pool table and a table tennis table. The black youth identified with the place because of the publicity.

After the trial I was arrested *so many times!* At the end of the 1970s I was charged with allowing the place to be used for drugs. This time it was the Mangrove Six. We went to court and won again.

It was harassment all the time, right up until 1989. It is difficult to know why I stayed. I suppose I was just not going to put my tail between my legs and run off.

We wanted to expose the racism in the police force. Black people get a hard time. Families are broken up through false arrests and planting.

Now I want to know what will be done with the police officers who testified against me.

The worst kind of error

THE POLITICAL FRONT

By Annie O'Keeffe

LAST NOVEMBER the SWP make a grievous mistake — a bizarre, strange, almost inexplicable mistake. Suddenly — without warning, preparation, or reasoned argument — it launched a campaign for an all-out general strike.

One day the SWP was obsessively going on — as for a decade it has gone on — about the "downturn" in the working class movement — and the next day they were calling for a general strike!

The Tories announced the imminent closure of 31 pits, and were greeted by a tremendous cry of protest. But even before the inspiring but limited trade union demonstrations in London on October 22 and 26, the SWP had decided overnight, that the downturn was over and that — miraculously — we were close to the very crest of an upturn in working class strength, combativity and militancy. Now, Socialist Worker insisted the next step had to be an all-out general strike!

No explanation was offered except that "the mood had changed". In fact the main change was in the mood of the SWP's leaders.

None of this made sense, as we argued at length in *Socialist Organiser*. It was all arbitrary and subjective. The labour movement was only beginning to revive. Even a Trotskyist TUC would not call an all-out general strike in these circumstances. It would call a series of limited, exploratory actions, link up trade union struggles, and then see.

In the week after the great October demos, it became apparent to the leaders of the SWP that they had made a mistake. Admit it? Oh no! They merely put the "General Strike" in smaller print. On the 7 February demo on their placards read: "Sack Major, not the miners!" Down at the bottom, in smaller letters, was the call for a general strike.

Now, every person and every organisation makes mistakes. The only way you can be sure you will never make a mistake is to die.

In politics, mistakes are inevitable. Serious people learn from their mistakes. So do serious organisations. The others — like the SWP — fall victim to their own mistakes.

It seems that Tony Cliff, whose brainstorm this ridiculous lurch was, only got it through the all-powerful Central Committee by one vote (4-3), and that there was widespread resistance amongst SWP members to "the turn". Since the SWP is not a democratic organisation, but a sort of pietified cult in politics, then structured, democratic dissent or debate was not possible. But you can not entirely suppress politics, even in a heavily depoliticised organisation like the one Pope Tony the First has built.

Discussions — necessarily secret and undercover discussion — broke out. Political pontiffs must claim infallibility. They can not allow discussion, especially discussion of their mistakes. And thus they have now 'had to' start to expel long-time members for "secret factionalism" — people like long-time Party leaders Phil Taylor and Maureen Watson and others.

Much better than the quasi-Stalinist organisational structures of the SWP is a democratic organisation like the Alliance for Workers' Liberty. An organisation able to discuss the issues, and able when necessary to face up to its mistakes in a way that educates and develops its members.

The SWP proclaims itself "the revolutionary party". It is not a party but a futile sect subject to the political whims and vagaries of Cliff and his coterie, who now seem to have lost their ability to tell what political time of the day it is.



Paul Condon, new boss of London's police

Defending communities and jobs

Speaking in London on 8 February, miners' union President Arthur Scargill explained why trade unionists should vote on 5 March for a 24-hour strike to support the miners. All the pits should be kept open: otherwise up to 30,000 miners and 70,000 other workers will be thrown onto the dole.



Photo: John Harris

THE RAIL and coal industries have many similarities. Prior to the Second World War, rail and coal were both privately owned. They made massive losses. They were only sustained at a massive cost to the taxpayer.

We should remind ourselves that privatisation is not some new gimmick. It will not save us from homelessness, unemployment and recession. In fact privatisation will mean higher levels of

unemployment and homelessness. Above all, communities will be destroyed.

In 1979 we had the election of a Conservative government which is consistent and which is loyal to its class.

In 1979 the intentions of the Tories were clear: to create mass unemployment so that 40 people chase every vacancy; to implement the most vicious trade union legislation ever seen. They wanted to destroy effective trade unionism.

This is a government which practises what it preaches — and there is a lesson here for the next time we have a Labour government.

It is time the Labour leadership stopped tinkering with sound bites, with spin doctors and with flashy presentation. It is time they told us in clear terms that the next Labour government will not only renationalise all the industries the Tories have privatised, but nationalise the banks and insurance companies too.

In 1982 we had a special TUC Conference at Wembley. And we all pledged to go to jail rather than to succumb to the Tories and their new trade

union legislation.

There was a prospect of having to share the same cell as Frank Chapple, but I consoled myself with the thought that it would be for the movement!

But during the miners' strike of 1984-85, with a few honourable exceptions, the movement virtually surrendered... we should have been declaring war on the Conservative government.

The Tory opposition do not attack as isolated individuals. They have the whole weight of the state behind them. They will use the law, the media and the police to crush any section of the working class which dares to defend wages and conditions.

Our movement must realise that it must come together to defend the rights we have fought for and won. We need solidarity.

Contrast our movement's response to that of the store owners. They have no problem about breaking the law and trading on Sundays — it is in their interests.

But when the miners and rail workers talk about a twenty-four hour stoppage to defend jobs, they are condemned for not following the letter of the anti-union legislation.

There is a threat to all our jobs. The

"I appeal to miners and railway workers to vote on 5 March for a twenty-four hour strike."

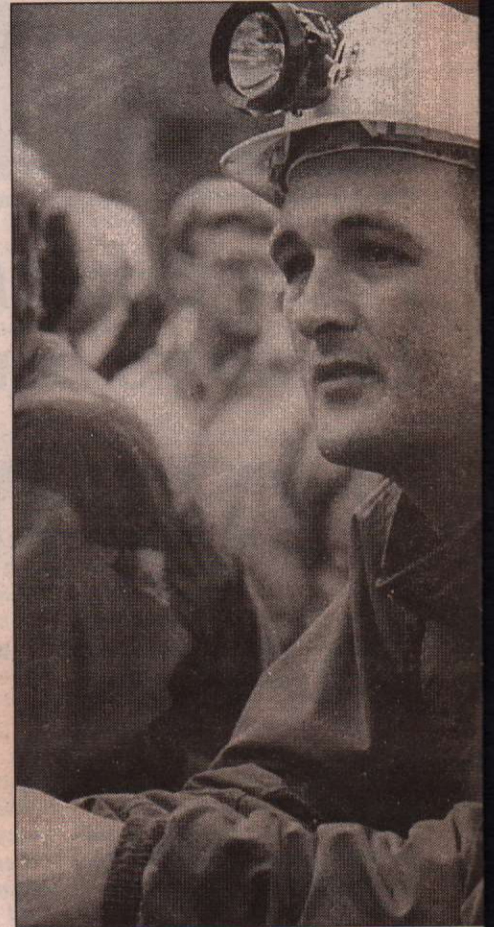
pit closure programme announced in October is not just about miners' jobs. Thousands of British Rail jobs are threatened. 16 coal-fired power stations could go, along with 15,000 engineering jobs.

70,000 workers in addition to 30,000 miners face the dole.

The Employment Committee report said all the pits should remain open.

The argument is easy. It costs £9,300 to keep a man or woman unemployed. It is a national disgrace that we have 4 million people doing nothing. Yet there is trouble when we talk about subsidies to industry in order to keep people in work. It is absurd.

On Department of Trade and Industry Select Committees we have had four Labour MPs who have gone along



Labour MPs should not have backed calls

with the Tories.

They know that nuclear power is 350% more expensive, and gas produced electricity is 30% dearer than coal. But still these Labour Party members voted for a report which projects a reduction in the coal market from 65 million to 46 million tons. That is the equivalent of 20 pit closures.

The Labour MPs also support so-called "changes in working practices". They have actually supported a recommendation for a 10 hour day and a six or seven day working week in the pits.

I say that there should have been a Minority Report. We should have said clearly that we are against a six day working week.

The question is: where do we go from here? There is a threat to all our jobs. There is a threat to our pension funds. It is clear to me that pension fund money should only be used for those that have retired from the industry. It is their money.

Moreover, I know we have public sympathy. **But at the end of the day, if we want to defend our pension funds and our jobs we will have to take industrial action.**

We marched. We have had the church on our side. But the Tories are imper-

The case for solidarity with the miners: vote yes

ies



for a six-day work week in the pits. Photo: Mark Salmon



Women have organised "pit camps" to protest against closures.

vious to argument. That is why I appeal to miners and railway workers to vote on 5 March for a twenty-four hour strike as part of a rolling programme of industrial action. In one day of industrial action workers can learn more than in twenty years of intensive education.

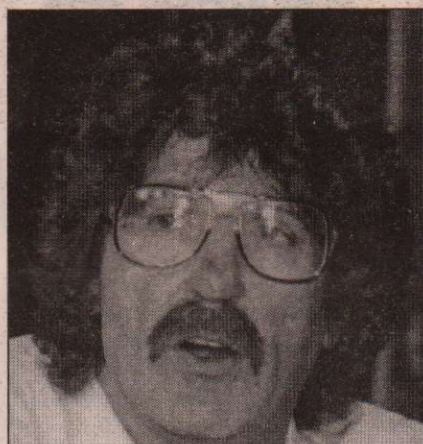
On Friday 5 February women started a pit camp outside Michael Heseltine's house. The police came along. They sent the fire brigade to put out the bra-

zier. The firefighters saw the picket line and turned away. So the police put out the fire themselves — they did it from the wrong side and got covered in soot.

Well, they can put out one fire but they cannot extinguish a belief. We are going to take the action we need to defend our communities and jobs. And in the process we will pave the way for the only redundancies which I want — Heseltine's and Major's!

Organise the rank and file!

By Paul Whetton (Secretary of the Notts Miners' Rank and File Strike Committee in 1984-5)



WHAT ARE THE lessons of the early '70s? Then trade unionism was on a high. We kicked the Tories and their Industrial Relations Act into touch, and the miners won two great strikes in 1972 and 1974.

Everybody remembers '72 and '74, but nobody remembers '73. That was the year that we accepted the Coal Board's offer "in the national interest". That led to '74.

And when in 1972 the police had to pack up and march away from Saltley Gate they learned their lesson. They went away and did their homework, and they vowed and declared that that would never happen again. Nevertheless we won again in 1974. But they continued their preparations so that one day they would repay the miners, and repay trade unionism in general. Because — and the cops knew it well — Saltley Gate was as much a victory for the engineers as it was a victory for the miners.

So they plotted and learned their lessons, and they built up their forces and rehearsed them. And in 1981 they went for the South Wales miners, and when the South Wales miners reacted the Tories backed off. They still didn't feel ready for a showdown. But they continued to get ready.

Then came Warrington, where police thuggery won a victory over the printers for Eddie Shah and the union busters. They had flexed their muscles, and now they felt they were ready for the mineworkers.

And so they deliberately provoked a strike. We could have walked away from that strike. We could have refused to be drawn into it. But then they would have gone ahead and shut down the pits anyway. We had to fight.

And we fought as many others have had to fight — in isolation. Although we got magnificent support in finance and food, that was not enough. It is not enough to give sympathetic solidarity. It needs to be the kind of solidarity that means coming out on strike and standing alongside other workers in struggle. That's the only solidarity that will beat the Tories.

The miners were allowed to go under. We warned other workers: "if the miners go under, then you're next". And, lo and behold, many trade unions have been "next", and each battle has once again been fought in isolation.

We look at Silentnight. We look at the seafarers. We look at the Fleet Street printers. We look at the dockers, and we see each one in its turn fighting, a magnificent battle but still going down to defeat.

The message that has got to be built on is this: the rank and file must organise and unite across industry, linking miners and hospital workers and teachers and engineers, linking the whole of the organised working class, and in every strike action be prepared to go out and demand class solidarity for workers in struggle — for all workers in struggle.

We need a rank and file movement which says "to hell with the Tory anti-union laws!" An unofficial movement which can say that without immediately falling victim to the union-busting fines which Mrs Thatcher's skinhead judges itch to inflict.

Out and out solidarity — that's got to be the message. The trade union rank and file must organise for it. The rank and file must be prepared to both demand it and give it. That is the only thing that is going to beat the Tories and beat employers who use Tory legislation in order to defeat the organised working class.

I think the main reason for the lack of effective solidarity in the struggles I've listed was fear.

First of all the fear of the dole queue. Every worker has been living in an atmosphere of fear that if they stick their head up above the parapet they will get it shot off.

Of course, it was magnificent what the railway workers did during the miners' strike. And many of them have paid the penalty, or are still paying the penalty.

I know that if enough workers had really come together and shown adequate solidarity that in itself would have been a defence against any workers getting picked off, as some workers were picked off when they did risk it.

If there had been an overall response from all the trade unions in the struggles I listed above, then the Tories and the bosses couldn't have done it. They can't imprison 11 million workers! It is when only a few brave souls are prepared to stand up that they can make an example of them, to put the fear of God into others.

When we all come together and we all rise at the same time, then we are unstoppable and untouchable.

A central lesson, the lesson of lessons, if you like, is this: the rank and file must never trust the trade union leaders, or the leaders of the Labour Party.

We have to use them but then, especially, we must keep a watchful, suspicious eye on them. We miners were in an unusual position — we had a leadership we could trust. But such leaderships are very, very few and far between, and that is why so much depends on the rank and file being organised and ready. Then, if it looks like being a sell-out, the rank and file itself can carry on the fight without the leadership, and against them where necessary.

Remember that the leadership is nothing without the rank and file. Many of them have climbed the ladder of success and pulled the ladder up behind them. We have seen many excellent left-wing rank and filers go up that ladder, and then they change, as if they have climbed into a different world. The truth is that it is a different world, the world of the trade union leaders, with their management level salaries, expensive union cars, lots of perks and so on and so on.

If the rank and file itself is prepared to organise and carry on the battle then the official leaderships can be pushed into some useful actions. At the same time, the rank and file is organised and prepared, armed with their eternal vigilance which is the prize of a healthy labour movement, to carry the battle forward — with or without the leadership.

on 5 March for a strike!

Communists and Socialists against Hitler,

How the united fr

In the second in a series of articles, Bruce Robinson explains why the German labour movement failed to form a united front to stop Hitler's rise to power in the 1930s.

THE PERIOD between Hitler's first major electoral victory in September 1930 and his winning power in January 1933 was one of continuous political crisis in Germany. Parliamentary government was effectively suspended. Rule was by emergency decree and power was effectively wielded by a small group of Conservatives with close links to the army, the large Prussian landowners and sections of finance and industry. These groups favoured — or came to favour as a result of the economic crisis — an authoritarian regime which would put paid to the need to make concessions to the labour movement and would reverse the Treaty of Versailles (the treaty imposed by World War One's victors, which demanded huge payments from Germany).

In 1930 they were not yet prepared to look to the Nazis to perform these tasks for them. They both feared the effects of declaring effective civil war on the labour movement and had doubts about Hitler's reliability as a defender of the existing order. So this period saw a number of unstable, transitional governments, which had neither Parliamentary nor real social weight. They could only rest on the back of the state machine, extemporising, preparing attacks on the workers, negotiating — now with the Social Democrats (SPD) and unions, then with the Nazis. The government was a "ball on top of a pyramid", which would quickly fall down one side or the other — handing over power to fascists or being overthrown by a socialist revolution. By the end of 1932 this method of rule was totally paralysed and saw the only solution as calling Hitler to power.

The workers' movement was on the defensive. But Hitler's road to power was still not inevitable. Despite doubling his electoral support between 1930 and 1932, Hitler himself was unsure whether his strategy of coming to power legally would succeed. He had to tread a fine line between maintaining the dynamism of a mass extra-parliamentary fascist movement (which required the use of radical-sounding demagoguery) and indicating to the ruling circles that he could be entrusted with power. In January 1932 he reassured the Industrial Club that he would defend private property and curb the radical wing of the Nazi Party. This contradiction was not fully resolved until the "Night of the Long Knives" in 1934 removed those sections of the Nazis calling for a "second revolution". Before 1933, Hitler was still forced to try to con-

vince the ruling class to help him to power.

In the event, the longer the major workers' organisations allowed fascism to grow, the more attractive it became as a political weapon for the bourgeoisie and the more the threat of civil war receded. The legalism of the SPD and the ultra-left policy of the Communist Party (KPD) both demoralised the working class and eased Hitler's path to power. In Trotsky's view the SPD had long since proved its loyalty to the bourgeois state and would side with it to crush attempts at revolution. Now the SPD tolerated Brüning's emergency rule (which paved the way for Hitler as "the lesser evil"). However it still retained the loyalty of the majority of the working class.

The KPD was still capable of revolutionary politics if it broke from Stalin's policy but remained in a minority in the working class. The task was therefore to defeat the immediate threat of fascism by means of the united front and, at the same time, to win the majority of the workers to the revolutionary road. Trotsky's advice was therefore intended to set the KPD back on this road.

Instead in late 1930 the KPD tried to compete with the Nazis for a nationalist audience.

As the turnover of KPD membership was estimated at about 50% per annum and the party's sectarianism had

lost it much of its foothold among the employed workers, the KPD and Nazis were to some extent drawing on the same social layers (particularly the unemployed) for their support. Emphasising the 'national oppression' of Germany under Versailles, the KPD started talking about a 'people's revolution' instead of proletarian revolution. In Trotsky's words, "the Stalinist bureaucracy strives more and more to act against fascism with its own weapons, borrowing the colours of its political palette and trying to outshout it at the auction of patriotism".

IN AN APPARENT turnaround in July 1931, the KPD approached the leaders of the SPD in the Prussian state parliament with the offer of a united front against fascism (Germany had a federal regime, with several regional or "state" governments, of which Prussia was by far the most important). The Prussian parliament was a prime target of the right as it was an SPD stronghold, which gave the SPD control over the police. When the SPD leaders refused the KPD's conditions, the KPD, on Comintern orders, then took part in a referendum campaign designed to overthrow the Prussian government alongside the Nazis and Nationalists.

Trotsky caustically commented:

"If the Social Democracy is a variety of fascism, then how can one officially make a demand to social fascists for a joint defence of democracy? Once on the road of the referendum, the party bureaucracy did not put any conditions to the National Socialists. Why? If

"The united front policy corresponded to real feelings among Socialist, Communist and unorganised workers"



Hitler with his paramilitary "SA" thugs prior to the Night of the Long Knives when many of their leaders were killed for proposing a "second revolution"

the Social Democrats and the National Socialists are only shades of fascism then why can conditions be put to the Social Democracy and not to the National Socialists? Or perhaps between these two 'varieties' there exist certain very important qualitative differences as regards the social base and the method of deceiving the masses? But then, do not call both of them fascists, because names in politics serve to differentiate and not in order to throw everything in the same heap"

The KPD's policy could only lead to demoralisation amongst the workers and tie the Social Democratic rank and file more closely to their leaders. The KPD-Nazi alliance was not just a one-off aberration. It was repeated in the Berlin transport workers' strike of November 1932, when the KPD's union wing, the RGO, (which was outside the official unions) took the leadership of the strike jointly with the Nazis.

From the end of 1931 onwards, Trotsky sounded the alarm more and more vigorously, emphasising the need for a united front of struggle and taking up fears that this would mean surrendering to Social Democracy.

"The front must now be directed against fascism. And this common front of direct struggle against fascism, embracing the entire proletariat, must be utilised in the struggle against the Social Democracy, directed as a flank attack but no less effective for that..."

"No common platform with the Social Democracy, or with the leaders of the German trade unions, no common publications, banners, placards. March separately, but strike together! Agree only how to strike, whom to strike and when to strike! Such an agreement can be concluded even with the devil himself, with his grandmother and even

with Noske and Grzesinsky [counter-revolutionary SPD leaders].

"Worker-communists, you are hundreds of thousands, millions; you cannot leave for anywhere, there are not enough passports for you. Should fascism come to power it will ride over your skulls and spines like a terrific tank. Your salvation lies in merciless struggle. And only a fighting unity with the Social Democratic workers can bring victory."

How practical was the policy of the united front in the German conditions? There are a number of indications that it corresponded to real feelings in both the SPD and KPD and among unorganised workers, particularly as the Nazis fought for control of the streets in the winter of 1931-2.

Although the German Trotskyists (the VLO) only numbered about 600 they were able by mid-1932 to sell over 50,000 pamphlets by Trotsky advocating the united front. In a few areas where they either had deep roots in the local labour movement or where the KPD was absent, the Trotskyists had considerable success in pursuing united front tactics.

In Bruchsal, the KPD was absent and the VLO had seats on the local council. They set up an action committee made up of the VLO, SPD and unions, which was eventually sabotaged by the bureaucracy of the SPD. In Oranienburg, Helmut Schneeweiss and about 100 comrades were expelled from the KPD and then joined the VLO as a result of the influence of Trotsky's writings. Schneeweiss had been known locally as a champion of the unemployed since the mid '20s and the VLO was able to carry out a successful joint May Day demonstration with the SPD. They then set up a "Workers' Committee of Struggle" with the KPD

1930-1933

Front was wrecked



Hitler shaking hands with president von Hindenburg on becoming Chancellor, 1933.



1932 Nazi election poster

The Nazis' road to triumph

1918:

Germany defeated in World War I. Old regime, headed by Emperor, collapses: liberal "Weimar Republic" set up.

1918-23:

Successive waves of workers' revolution defeated and suppressed.

1930:

Economic crisis leads to collapse of parliamentary government. A series of emergency regimes follow. Nazis win 18% of the vote.

1932:

Unemployment rises to 5 million, July: Social Democrat regional government in Prussia deposed; Nazis become biggest single party in German parliament.

January 1933:

President von Hindenburg calls Hitler to power.

and SPD, which set up workers' defence squads, held anti-fascist meetings and co-ordinated work in the factories and with the unemployed.

In Erkenschwick in the Ruhr the Trotskyists took the initiative at a meeting of 1,000 workers about unemployment and a similar committee was set up which included the ADGB (the official unions). The Trotskyists' platform, which was adopted by the committee included, as well as opposition to fascism, calls for workers' control, a 40 hour week with no loss of pay, no to wage and welfare cuts, for a national organisation of workers' committees, and defence of the USSR.

The success of the Trotskyists' small scale efforts reflected an unease within the larger workers' parties at the policies of their lead-

ers. By spring 1932, a number of KPD districts had proposed local joint action with the SPD. For a short period, following electoral setbacks, the KPD focussed on work through Anti-Fascist Action, making the

"In a few areas, the Trotskyists had considerable success in building united fronts"

Nazi rather than the SPD the main enemy. By July 1932, however, the Comintern intervened to bring the KPD back to its previous line and to warn against 'opportunism'. On 14 July the KPD called on all branches to break off any united front negotiations with the SPD or official union.

Even though the new tactics had begun to break the isolation of the KPD and had resulted from pressure from within, the party was unable and unwilling to change the line laid down from Moscow.

Within the SPD the leadership had also to deal with discontent with its policy of toler-

ation of inactivity against the Nazis. Almost 30,000 members left to join the left wing SAP when its leaders were expelled in October 1931. In the same month defence organisations were spontaneously set up to match the common organisation of the Nazi and Nationalist paramilitaries. The so-called Iron Front brought together many of the younger elements in the unions and SPD, who wanted a real fight against the Right. Unfortunately the Iron Front put itself at the disposal of the existing reformist leadership and it was never to be deployed, even when the SPD government in Prussia was overthrown.

The policy of the united front therefore rested on a real feeling among the working class of a need for united resistance to fascism. However the official leaderships of the KPD and SPD still remained in control and opposed to joint action. The result was to be the worst of all defeats — capitulation without a battle. The next part of this series will indicate why the ruling class eventually turned to Hitler and how this defeat came about.

What Marx meant by value and surplus value

In the 110 years since Marx's death the main target for bourgeois anti-Marxists has been his theory of value, the basis of his entire analysis of the laws of motion of capitalist development.

The fundamental difference between Marxism and bourgeois "neo-classical" economics lies in the basic concepts on which the two theories are built up.

Marx's theory starts from an analysis of human labour in society, and the specific social form that the products of labour take under capitalism: the commodity form, things to be bought or sold on the market.

Bourgeois "neo-classical" economics turns the real world on its head. Its starting point is an absurd, contentless abstraction: the idea that all goods possess "general utility".

Of course, the idea of any specific really existing thing being useful in general is ridiculous. Buckets and ladders are not interchangeable. Your CD player will not work as a washing machine.

On the other hand, Marx's basic notion of social labour is something real.

This is how Marx himself replied to one bourgeois economist who reviewed *Capital*:

The man is making the biggest possible concession in admitting that, if anything can be imagined under the term 'value', then one must admit to my conclusions. The unfortunate man does not see that even if there had been no chapter at all on 'Value' in my book, then the analysis of the real relations which I provide would contain the proof and evidence of the real relation of value. All the gossip about the necessity of proving the concept of value is based on the most complete ignorance, as much of the problem under discussion as of the scientific method. Every child knows that any nation which stopped work — I will not say for one year — but just for a couple of weeks, would die. And every child knows that the volume of products corresponding to the various needs calls for various and quantitatively determined amounts of total social labour. It is self-evident that this necessity of the division of social labour in certain proportions is not at all negated by the specific form of social production but can only alter its mode of appearance. Natural laws can never be negated. Only the form in which those laws are applied can be altered in historically different situations.

Marx's Labour Theory of Value is therefore nothing other than an application of his dialectical and historical method to the analysis of capitalism.

Tragically, this argument is rarely accepted on the academic left.

As practitioners of their 'own' particular 'discipline' (sociology, politics, philosophy, economics, etc.), academic Marxists have often disclaimed Marx's understanding of capitalism as a whole. For instance, there are Marxist 'sociologists' arguments reproduce the ridiculous atomisation and compartmentalisation of bourgeois social theory within 'Marxism' itself.

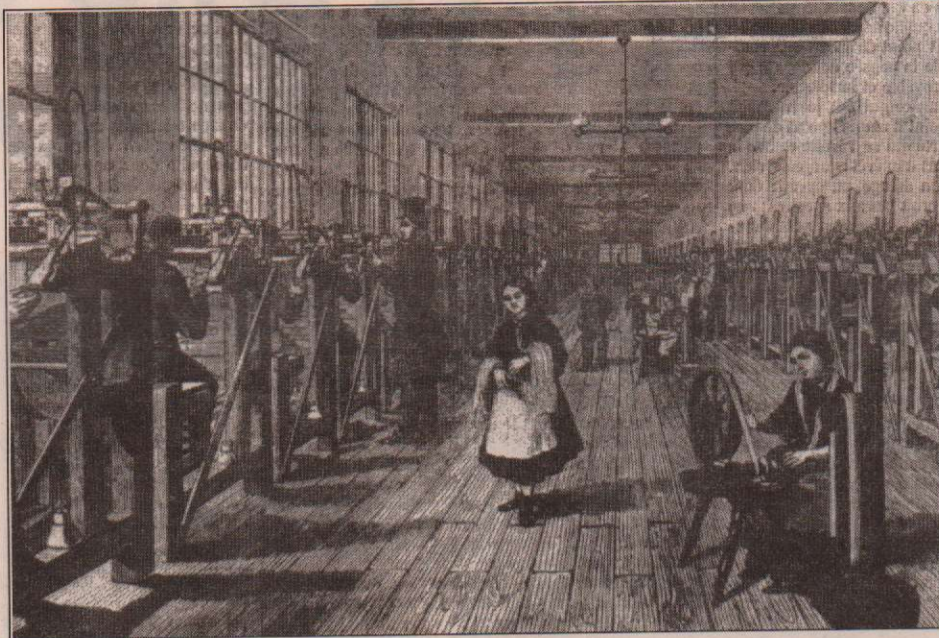
Marx's labour theory of value contains a whole series of "metaphysical", unscientific, and therefore indefensible assumptions, they say whereas his social theory has lots of "insights" which can be integrated into a "broader" framework. This is usually done by adding on this or that bit of whichever strand of professional "sociology" happens to be in vogue.

Marx's Labour Theory of Value is at the heart of his critique of capitalism. It takes effort and concentration to master it, but if you want to be a better fighter against capitalism then the effort is well worth making. This article by Lenin in one of the best introductions to the theory.

" IT IS THE ULTIMATE aim of this work to reveal the economic law of motion of modern society" (that is to say, capitalist, bourgeois society), writes Marx in the preface to the first volume of *Capital*. The study of the production relationships in a given, historically determinate society, in their genesis, their development, and their decay — such is the content of Marx's economic teaching. In capitalist society the dominant feature is the production of commodities, and Marx's analysis therefore begins with an analysis of commodity.

Value

A commodity is, firstly, something that satisfies a human need; and, secondly, it is something



Marx's theory explains exploitation both in the 19th century industrial hells and in modern factories and offices

that is exchanged for something else. The utility of a thing gives it use-value. Exchange-value (or simply, value) presents itself first of all as the proportion, the ratio, in which a certain number of use-values of one kind are exchanged for a certain number of use-values of another kind. Daily experience shows us that by millions upon millions of such exchanges, all and sundry use-values, in themselves very different and not comparable one with another, are equated to one another.

Now, what is common in these various things which are constantly weighed one against another in a definite system of social relationships? That which is common to them is that they are products of labour. In exchanging products, people equate to one another most diverse kinds of labour. The production of commodities is a system of social relationships in which different producers produce various products (the social division of labour), and in which all these products are equated to one another in exchange.

Consequently, the element common to all commodities is not concrete labour in a definite branch of production, not labour of one particular kind, but abstract human labour — human labour in general.

All the labour power of a given society, represented in the sum total of values of all commodities, is one and the same human labour power. Millions upon millions of acts of exchange prove this. Consequently, each particular commodity represents only a certain part of socially necessary labour time.

The magnitude of the value is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour, or by the labour time that is socially requisite for the production of the given commodity, of the given use-value:

"... Exchanging labour products of different kinds one for another, they equate the values of the exchanged products; and in doing so they equate the different kinds of labour expended in production, treating them as homogeneous human labour. They do not know that they are doing this, but they do it."

As one of the earlier economists said, value is a relationship between two persons, only he should have added that it is a relationship hidden beneath a material wrapping.

W E CAN ONLY understand what value is when we consider it from the point of view of a system of social production relationships in one particular historical type of society; and, moreover, of relationships which present themselves in a mass form, the phenomenon of exchange repeating itself millions upon millions of times. "As values, all commodities are only definite quantities of congealed labour time."

Having made a detailed analysis of the twofold

character of the labour incorporated in commodities, Marx goes on to analyse the form of value and of money. His main task, then, is to study the origin of the money form of value, to study the historical process of the development of exchange, beginning with isolated and casual acts of exchange ("simple, isolated, or casual value form," in which a given quantity of one commodity is exchanged for a given quantity of another), passing on to the universal form of value, in which a number of different commodities are exchanged for one and the same particular commodity, and ending with the money form of value, when gold becomes this particular — commodity, the universal equivalent.

Being the highest product of the development of exchange and of commodity production, money masks the social character of individual labour, and hides the social tie between the various producers who, come together in the market. Marx analyses in great detail the various functions of money; and it is essential to note that here (as generally in the opening chapters of *Capital*) what appears to be an abstract and at times purely deductive mode of exposition in reality reproduces a gigantic collection of facts concerning the history of the development of exchange and commodity production.

Money... presupposes a definite level of commodity exchange. The various forms of money (simple commodity equivalent or means of circulation, or means of payment, treasure, or international money) indicate, according to the different extent to which this or that function is put into application, and according to the imperative predominance of one or other of them, very different grades of the social process of production. [Capital, vol. I]

Surplus Value

A T A PARTICULAR stage in the development of commodity production, money becomes transformed into capital. The formula of commodity circulation was C-M-C (commodity—money—commodity); the sale of one commodity for the purpose of buying another. But the general formula of capital, on the contrary, is M-C-M' (money—commodity—money); purchase for the purpose of selling — at a profit.*

The designation "surplus value" is given by Marx to the increase over the original value of money that is put into circulation. The fact of this "growth" of money in capitalist society is well known. Indeed, it is this "growth" which transforms money into capital, as a special, historically defined, social relationship of production.

Surplus value cannot arise out of the circulation of commodities, for this represents nothing

more than the exchange of equivalents; it cannot arise out of an advance in prices, for the mutual losses and gains of buyers and sellers would equalise one another; and we are concerned here, not with what happens to individuals, but with a mass or average or social phenomenon.

In order that he may be able to receive surplus value, "Moneybags must... find in the market a commodity whose use-value has the peculiar quality of being a source of value" — a commodity, the actual process of whose use is at the same time the process of the creation of value. Such a commodity exists. It is human labour power.

I ts use is labour, and labour creates value. The owner of money buys labour power at its value, which is determined, like the value of every other commodity, by the socially necessary labour time requisite for its production (that is to say, the cost of maintaining the worker and his family.) Having bought labour power, the owner of money is entitled to use it, that is to set it to work for the whole day — twelve hours, let us suppose. Meanwhile, in the course of six hours ("necessary" labour time) the labourer produces sufficient to pay back the cost of his own maintenance; and in the course of the next six hours ("surplus" labour time), he produces a "surplus" product for which the capitalist does not pay him — surplus product or surplus value.

In capital, therefore, from the viewpoint of the process of production, we have to distinguish between two parts: first, constant capital, expended for the means of production (machinery, tools, raw materials, etc.), the value of this being (all at once or part by part) transferred, unchanged, to the finished product; and, secondly, variable capital, expended for labour power. The value of this latter capital is not constant, but grows in the labour process, creating surplus value.

To express the degree of exploitation of labour power by capital, we must therefore compare the surplus value, not with the whole capital, but only with the variable capital. Thus, in the example just given, the rate of surplus value, as Marx calls this relationship, will be 6:6, i.e., 100%.

Footnote

* "In the simple circulation of commodities, the two extremes of the circuit have the same economic form. They are both commodities, and commodities of equal value. But they are also use-values differing in their qualities, as, for example, corn and clothes. The exchange of products, of the different materials in which the labour of society is embodied, forms here the basis of the movement. It is otherwise in the circulation M—C—M, which at first sight appears purposeless, because tautological. Both extremes have the same economic form. They are both money, and therefore are not qualitatively different use-values; for money is but the converted form of commodities, in which their particular use-values vanish. To exchange £100 for cotton, and then this same cotton again for £100, is merely a roundabout way of exchanging money for money, the same for the same, and appears to be an operation just as purposeless as it is absurd.

"One sum of money is distinguishable from another only by its amount. The character and tendency of the process M—C—M, is therefore not due to any qualitative difference between its extremes, both being money, but solely to their quantitative difference. More money is withdrawn from circulation at the finish than was thrown into it at the start. The cotton that was bought for £100 is perhaps resold for £100 + £10 or £110. The exact form of this process is therefore M—C—M', where M' = M + ΔM = the original sum advanced, plus an increment. This increment or excess over the original value I call "surplus value". The value originally advanced, therefore, not only remains intact while in circulation, but adds to itself a surplus-value or expands itself. It is this movement that converts it into capital."

Marx, *Capital* Vol I, Chapter 4



Jeff Goldblum and Larry Fishburne star in this unusual formula

Sweet, justified revenge

Film

Dan Katz reviews *Deep Cover*

Did you see "The Big Chill" on TV over Christmas? I can put up with the American-Jewish humour, but I didn't like Jeff Goldblum in his unsympathetic role.

"Deep Cover" is better. Goldblum — an urbane, effete, drug-dealing lawyer — is transformed from the bashed Jew into the beater of anti-semites. I'm sorry to be so unfashionable but justifi-

fied bloody revenge is very pleasant!

"This film has been calculated to satisfy all the lowest common denominator prejudices..."

To be precise, Goldblum shoots the anti-semitic in the bollocks and kicks him out of a moving car.

The black man thumps the white creep who thinks it is OK to test the reactions of black people by using racism. I enjoyed that too. So did the rest of the audience from what I could hear.

In fact though, this film has been calculated to satisfy all the lowest common denominator prejudices: good over evil, decency over corruption, and sweet, justified revenge for bitter wrongs. Larry Fishburne, the sexy black cop who is kind to children, deals drugs to nail the big pushers. The baddies get shot and the cop gets the (good-

looking) woman.

There is big politics too. Fishburne's cop is sent under cover to crack a drug chain which stretches up to an important South American politician. As he gets close he is told to lay off. The politician has been "a friend to the US government".

Because of the politics, the cop in deep cover has been killing people without an end result. He breaks from his bosses. To tell you the rest would be to tell you the ending.

For a formula film, it's nicely done. I apologise again: I enjoyed it.

The treacherous "American Dream"

Television

Liz Millward reviews *Roseanne*, Channel 4, Friday

ROSEANNE MAY not be everyone's cup of tea, but this week's episode (the first of a new series) should have been mandatory viewing — especially for the Tories. Dan goes out of business, the bank threatens to repossess the house, Mark (who worked for Dan) loses his job, gets another one a thousand miles away — whereupon Roseanne's daughter Becky, runs away from home to be with him.

As if this wasn't all, Roseanne goes to a job interview, only to find two hundred other hopeful applicants.

This is life as we know it, except that Roseanne's family manage to laugh. Most people don't cope so well. Roseanne's children blame their parents for the lack of money, especially Becky.

In theory, British education is still free. But we all know that young people can no longer live on a grant, if they are lucky enough to get one. In America, children's chances of a college education depend entirely on a parent's ability to pay. Roseanne's daughter does well at school, and innocently asks "Where can I go to college, how much have you saved?" The answer is nowhere, nothing.

The girl cries that she had been told that she had to do well at school in order to go to a good college. She's done well, so why can't she go to college?

How can parents answer questions like these? The children's future is entirely dependent on the parents' ability to save, and that means having enough income to live on, and some more on top. Most people can only just manage to live, never mind save

as well.

Young people are being taught that it doesn't matter how hard you work at school, how good your exam results are, there are still no opportunities out there. Kids blame their parents, because there is no one else close up to blame. The media and the Tories tell young people that anyone can "make it" if they work hard enough, so obviously when there is no money in the college fund the parents must

have been lazy. Becky denounces her father as a failure and then goes off to be a teenage bride.

We don't expect social messages from programmes like *Roseanne*, but this week we got one. Unless the fairy godmother comes to visit, things can only get worse for Roseanne and Dan. The programme is successful because it is so close to the bone, but it would be truer to life without the laughter. But then it would not be *Roseanne*.

Press Censorship

Poem

By Ferdinand Freiligrath — a friend and comrade of Karl Marx
Translated by JL Joynes

Old tales of bygone ages tell
That hangmen rude and rough
Have hurled their rope and axe to Hell,
And cried, "It is enough:
The ghost of murder haunts our bed,
Knocks nightly at our door;
Yourselves your traitors may behead,
But we'll behead no more."

When will the people dare to say
To high-placed hangmen here,
No more shall they have leave to slay,
And put our scribes in fear?
When will they tell the rascal knaves,

Whate'er be sold and bought,
Our bodies though they sell for slaves,
They shall not chain our thought?

Nay, never — may the cur that claims
To mutilate our verse,
And wield the pen that mars and maims,
Be crippled with our curse!
For whosoe'er with guilty hands
Would thought's free range control,
Attempts to bind in impious bands
Their Holy Ghost, the soul.

And if the soul indeed has sinned,
The soul ye cannot slay:
Come, point your pikes against the wind;
Bid cannon clear the way! —
Nay, throw your ink-pots on the sand,
Your scissors in the sea;
Henceforth shall none in all our land
A censor dare to be.

The blackmailer blackmailed

Periscope

Timewatch — BBC2,
Wednesday 24 February,
8.10pm.

J. EDGAR HOOVER ran America's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for 48 years. He wielded immense power over Presidents and Congresses because he knew "where the bodies were buried". He used his organisation to pry into their secrets.

He could blackmail President John F Kennedy because he knew all about Kennedy's over-active sex life.

By blackmail, and the threat of blackmail, he put himself beyond the reach of the USA's elected representatives. The politicians were answerable to the blackmailing policeman; the policeman was not answerable to the self-protecting politicians.

Hoover manipulated the mass media, films, radio, and TV to make himself and the FBI the great all-American heroes of the age. Millions of kids grew up wanting to be "G-men".

Meanwhile, organised crime, which the FBI existed to fight, grew and spread into the great cancerous realm of "wild", subversive, illegal capitalism whose power today is so immense. Hoover made a song and dance about catching stick-up men like John Dillinger and Pretty Boy Floyd, while for decades he denied that the Mafia existed!

"Timewatch says it was because America's most powerful policeman was in the hands of the Mafia!"

Why? "Timewatch" says it was because America's most powerful policeman was in the hands of the Mafia! The Mafia had evidence proving that Hoover was an active homosexual.

It was a case of the blackmailer blackmailed. Thus, a circle of blackmail linked the Mafia by way of Hoover to presidents and governments, and inevitably gave the Mafia great power over those presidents and over members of Congress. The Mafia could blackmail Hoover, and Hoover could blackmail the politicians.

Why you should be a socialist

WE LIVE IN A capitalist world. Production is social; ownership of the social means of production is private. Ownership by a state which serves those who own most of the means of production is also essentially "private".

Those who own the means of production buy the labour power of those who own nothing but their labour-power and set them to work. At work they produce more than the equivalent of their wages. The difference (today in Britain it may be more than £20,000 a year per worker) is taken by the capitalist. This is exploitation of wage-labour by capital, and it is the basic cell of capitalist society, its very heart-beat.

Everything else flows from that. The relentless drive for profit and accumulation decreases the judgment of all things in existence by their relationship to productivity and profitability.

From that come such things as the savage exploitation of Brazilian goldminers, whose life expectancy is now less than 40 years, and the working to death — it is officially admitted by the government! — of its employees by advanced Japanese capitalism. From this comes the economic neglect and virtual abandonment to ruin and starvation of "unprofitable" places like Bangladesh and parts of Africa.

FROM THAT COMES the cultural blight and barbarism of our society force-fed on profitable pap. From it come products with "built-in obsolescence" in a society orientated to the grossly wasteful production and reproduction of shoddy goods, not to the development of leisure and culture.

From it come mass unemployment, the development of a vast and growing underclass, living in ghettos, and the recreation in some American cities of the worst Third World conditions.

From it comes the unfolding ecological disaster of a world crying out for planning and the rational use of resources, but which is, tragically, organised by the ruling classes around the principle of profitable anarchy and the barbarous worship of blind and humanly irrational market forces.

From it come wars and genocides: twice this century capitalist gangs possessing worldwide power have fallen on each other in quarrels over the division of the spoils, and wrecked the world economy, killing many tens of millions. From it come racism, imperialism and fascism.

The capitalist cult of icy egotism and the "cash nexus" as the decisive social tie produce societies like Britain's now, where vast numbers of young people are condemned to live in the streets, and societies like that of Brazil, where homeless children are hunted and killed on the streets like rodents.

From the exploitation of wage-labour comes this society of ours where the rich, who — through their servants and agents — hold state power, fight a relentless class struggle to maintain the people in a mental condition to accept their own exploitation and abuse, and prevent real democratic self-control developing within the forms of what they call democracy. They use tabloid propaganda or — as in the 1984-85 miners' strike — savage and illegal police violence — whatever they need to use. They have used fascist gangs when they needed to, and they will use them again, if necessary.

A GAINST THIS SYSTEM we seek to convince the working class — the wage slaves of the capitalist system — to fight for socialism. Socialism means the abolition of wage slavery, the taking of the social economy out of private ownership into common cooperative ownership. It means the full realisation of the old demands for liberty, equality and fraternity.

Under socialism the economy will be run and planned deliberately and democratically: market mechanisms will cease to be our master, and will be cut down and re-shaped to serve broadly sketched-out and planned, rational social goals.

We want public ownership of the major enterprises and a planned economy under workers' control.

The working class can and should win reforms within capitalism, but we can only win socialism by overthrowing capitalism and by breaking the state power — that is, the monopoly of violence and reserve violence — now held by the capitalist class. We want a democracy much fuller than the present Westminster system — a workers' democracy, with elected representatives recallable at any time, and an end to bureaucrats' and managers' privileges.

Socialism can never be built in one country alone. The workers in every country have more in common with workers in other countries than with their own capitalist or Stalinist rulers. We support national liberation struggles and workers' struggles worldwide; we back the struggles of workers and oppressed nationalities in the ex-Stalinist states of Eastern Europe and in still-Stalinist China.

What are the alternatives now? We may face new wars as European and Japanese capitalism confronts the US. Fascism is rising. Poverty, inequality and misery are growing. We are deep in the worse capitalist slump for 60 years.

Face the bitter truth: either we build a new, decent, sane, democratic world or, finally, the capitalists will ruin us all — we will be dragged down by the fascist barbarians or new massive wars. Civilisation will be eclipsed by a new dark age. The choice is socialism or barbarism.

Socialists work in the trade unions and the Labour Party to win the existing labour movement to socialism. We work with presently unorganised workers and youth.

To do that work the Marxists organise themselves in a democratic association, the Alliance for Workers' Liberty.

To join the **Alliance for Workers' Liberty**, write to: PO Box 823, London SE15 4NA.

ORGANISING

No deals with the "Last Chance" boys

PLATFORM

By Dan Katz

JIM DENHAM says "all socialists should stand with Kelvin and the boys at the Last Chance Saloon" (SO 546). A bloc with the *Sun* against censorship?

Well, not me, I'm afraid. We have nothing in common with these people. They dirty everything they touch.

Take Charles and Camilla. I am for a republic, but surely we can not go along with the way the sewer press have exposed their relationship. Who has not had such a conversation? Why should anyone read this?

I think any socialist whose reaction to Camillagate consists of laughing at Charles's embarrassment is wrong. The last thing we

need is to reinforce the hypocrisy and stupidity that is currently bound up with sex.

I am not just against Charles — I am for a republic. And I have no wish to fight for a republic by attacking a man for whom he sleeps with.

So, what should be done about the press? Clearly the Press Complaints Commission is a joke. *Socialist Organiser* knows this only too well. We were libelled by the *Independent on Sunday* in October last year. We were accused of ballot rigging in the Labour Party by a "journalist", Stephen Castle, who admitted, privately, that he had no evidence to back up the claim. Never mind, the PCC rejected our case. Not surprising really: the PCC is made up of the great and the good (rich people from the newspaper industry) and so only finds in favour

of one in forty complainants.

What about the libel laws? Maxwell used these laws to threaten bankruptcy on critics. Vanessa Redgrave, member of the loony Workers' Revolutionary Party, attempted to use her money to stop *Socialist Organiser* saying the WRP was crazy.

The libel laws are laws for the rich. But even giving Legal Aid for libel cases does not solve the problem. Why should publications (likely to be *Socialist Organiser* and *New Statesman* rather than the richer *Sun*) be driven under because of what they write?

Does Clive Soley MP have the answer? Soley's "Freedom and Responsibility of the Press Bill" promises protection against press lies. The question is: what is a lie? What is the truth? What is a fact? Soley wants a new body, an Independent Press Authority, to

decide.

What's the answer to the disgusting tabloid press?

Surely, better than press regulation — wrong in principle, and particularly so by a state we should not trust — is a law which guarantees the right of reply.

The right of reply would not deal with a press run by millionaires — only socialism will solve that one — but it is a policy for freedom and against censorship and bankruptcy.



Clive Soley MP: his Bill is no answer

Alliance for Workers' Liberty public meetings

Thurs 18 Feb

"Labour Must Fight" Newcastle AWL meeting. 7.30, Rossetti Studio.

Wed 24 Feb

"Why Stalinism collapsed in Eastern Europe". Lancaster University AWL meeting. 2.00, Student Union.

Basic Marxism Course. Northumbria University AWL meeting. 3.00, Student Union.

"The police and the state — what socialists say". AWL London Forum. 7.30, Basement, Lambeth Town Hall (Brixton tube).

Thurs 25 Feb

"Labour Must Fight". Leeds AWL meeting. 7.30, Adelphi Pub.

"Deportations from Israel — what we can do". City Poly AWL meeting. 12.30, Student Union Coffee Lounge, Old Castle Street.

Campaign Against the Child Support Act

Sat 20 February

National conference

Kingsway College, Sidmouth Street, Kings Cross, London.

10.00-6.00

Details from: 071-837 7509

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AWL Marxist dayschool: fight for workers' liberty!

Sat 20 February
Manchester Town Hall, 11.00-5.00

Sessions include:

- Is Clinton the answer?
- The West and Iraq
- Marxists and the unions.

Details from: 061-881 1377

INDUSTRIAL

Setback for cuts fight as NALGO rejects national action

By a Sheffield NALGO member

The serious left in the local government union NALGO, including Socialist Organiser supporters, have been agitating for a national day of action, based on a national ballot of all members, against the pay limit and cuts.

But on 11 February a meeting of delegates from all NALGO local government branches narrowly defeated two resolutions calling for a national ballot.

There can be no hiding the fact that this represents an absolutely huge setback for local government and public sector workers.

Despite the fact that the union's National Local Government Committee was

defeated on several issues, like strike pay and the Newham dispute, we will have no clear policy for a national fightback to hold them to.

Several resolutions were passed that called for a national day of action, coordinated action across branches, and huge campaigns against cuts. However, they were supported by the leadership, and some branches, precisely because they don't tie the union to national action.

Here the NALGO bureaucracy is using branch autonomy as an excuse for not giving a positive lead. The argument runs: "Your members are not clamouring to take action. It's just left activists. Therefore we would be foolish to call for action that could not be delivered".

NALGO will probably call a

day of action, possibly on 18 March. However, they will only sanction ballots for action, on a branch-by-branch basis, on condition that the branch has a "legitimate" trade dispute with the employer.

In practice this means that there will be a patchy response and the leadership will then cynically use the poor turnout as an excuse for not organising proper national action - "the low turnout proves that the members don't want to take action".

Some union delegates opposed the proposal for national action for honest reasons. They did not believe that a ballot could be won in the current mood of the members, and they felt that losing a ballot would effectively ruin any

chance of a national fight back this year.

It is true that local government workers generally have very little faith in separate disputes winning anything from central government. But local government workers' low confidence would be boosted if they thought there would be national action that could push back the Government.

In the current climate, with over four million unemployed, no economic upturn in sight, and no national rank-and-file or stewards' movement, it is virtually impossible for

activists and left-wing union branches to win and coordinate national action completely independently from and against the wishes of the union leaders. The way forward, then, is to take every opportunity to put pressure on the union and TUC leaders to call serious national action.

That is in no way to say that local action cannot get off the ground, or that lack of national action should be used as a legitimate excuse for avoiding local action.

We must continue to demand national action!

Building the fightback

The Newcastle City Council Joint Trade Union Committee, which successfully organised a regional day of action on 19 January, has called a conference of local government trade unionists on "Building the Fightback in Local Government", with the specific aim of building for a national one-day stoppage throughout local government in March.

This timely meeting could potentially lay the basis for an ongoing national cross-union local government shop stewards' network agitating for concerted national action.

Busworkers offered bribe to accept pay cut

Busworkers in South East London are facing severe attacks on their pay and conditions. Each employee has individually been sent a new contract through the post and given a deadline by which to sign it. The standard day is to go up to nine and a half hours and the cut in the hourly rate adds up to a loss of about £26 a week in pay.

They have been offered a compensatory one-off payment of £2,000, but have been told that if they don't accept the new contract by the 22 February then the offer of compensation will be off and they will just have to accept the contract or lump it. One conductor said, "Some of the old timers coming up to retirement just don't know what to do. We've had a new manager for the last year in our garage and in that year he has sacked 90 people. They are afraid that if they don't sign, they will lose everything: job, severance, the lot".

Similar attacks are happening to busworkers all across London, but different groups of garages are being threatened with different sets of conditions at different times. The London Bus Committee is holding a London-wide ballot against the attacks, asking workers if they are prepared to take strike action. This is very important as the weaker, badly organised garages may not be prepared to fight alone but would do so if they saw the rest of Lon-

don voting for action. The committee are also threatening court action over the sending of individual letters to workers' homes. The union is saying that these are threatening letters and therefore illegal. If the court threat is being used as a tactic to play for time whilst building in the garages for action then this is good. But if it is being used as an alternative to action this is disastrous.

It wouldn't be the first time that the London busworkers' union has placed its faith in the courts to rule against management's attacks. When, in 1987, Norbiton garage was set up for privatisation, token one day strikes were held at other garages but the main strategy of the union was to go to court. The judge obviously and predictably ruled that London Transport had a right to squeeze the workers and the action was called off. Since then all the garages have been consistently attacked; routes being sold off, garages closed and wages and conditions whittled away.

This time there must be no such illusions in the courts. Only the united action of the garages will put a stop to the latest offensive from management and if their action could be linked up with any resistance from attacks on the tube and rail workers, bringing London to a screeching halt, all the better.

Teachers must fight back on pay

THERE ARE three elements to the pay package imposed on teachers by the Tory Government.

* An increase of 0.5 per cent, plus a £90 lump sum, for classroom teachers - the worst increase in the public sector.

* Abolition of the system of incentive allowances and automatic increments, and the introduction instead of a common pay spine, giving

more power to school management to refuse to implement pay increases.

* Introduction of performance-related pay. Annual increments can be withheld for "unsatisfactory performance".

Teachers should immediately make their anger known in school meetings, and make sure they attend their next general meeting. Send motions to branches and the

national unions, demanding a campaign building up to national industrial action.

NUT and NAS/UWT should take united action, and branches should explore ways of initiating unity at local level.

The across-the-board attack on public sector pay should be discussed at joint public sector workers' meetings up and down the country.

Support the Yarrow's strike!

By Mary Cooper

WORKERS AT Yarrow's shipyard in Glasgow remain on indefinite strike.

Last week the 13,000 workers overwhelmingly rejected management's pay offer of a £300 lump sum. Three per cent was offered for the coming year, and the offer was tied to conditions that included shortened breaks and a cut in overtime payments.

No negotiations have taken place over the last week. The union has said that only a greatly improved offer will end the strike.

Eddie Horan, the union convenor, says that the workers are determined and prepared for a long strike.

The Scottish TUC's response has been lukewarm, to say the least. There were even rumours in the press that the STUC was about to condemn the strike.

The STUC has now changed tack, appearing to believe it can act as an "honest broker" between the bosses and the workers.

This reaction from the STUC is unacceptable. Workers fighting against cuts in real pay should be supported in the same way as those fighting closures, redundancies, and other attacks.

The labour movement should give all possible support to the Yarrow's strikers.

Hoover workers should unite across Europe

THE FIGHT to prevent the closure of the Hoover factory in Dijon France, has entered a "phony war" period.

Over 600 jobs are under threat as a result of Hoover's decision to transfer production to its Glasgow factory, where unions have agreed to a deal involving pay cuts and a ban on strikes.

After a fortnight-long strike in protest at Hoover's decision, the Dijon workers returned to work a week last Monday (8 February). A number of legal initiatives are now being undertaken to establish that Hoover bosses broke existing redundancy laws.

The French government has also lodged a complaint with the European Community in Brussels, concerning misuses of EC funds by Hoover. But the complaint has already been rejected by the EC Commissioner for Competition. Last week also witnessed a joint press conference in Brussels involving Campbell Christie (Scottish TUC General Secretary) and Louis Viannet (General Secretary of the French CGT trade union federation, linked to the French Communist Party). This too belonged in the realms of a "phony war".

According to Christie, "the unions at Cambuslang got the best they could, allowing for the circumstances".

The joint STUC-CGT statement produced at the press conference was loud in its condemnation of multinationals in general and of Hoover in particular, but completely silent on the deal with Hoover signed by Jimmy Airlie.

Nor did the statement propose any form of joint action by workers at Dijon and Cambuslang - despite the fact that right now that is the obvious focus for any fightback against multinationals.

Only occupation and workers' sanctions against any machinery which Hoover attempts to move out of the factory will save jobs.

Between now and June, when the redundancies in Dijon are due to start coming into effect, workers in Britain should be building support for the French workforce.

And the fight to save jobs at Dijon should also be a focus

for the European TUC's Day of Action against unemployment on 2 April.

Messages of support/requests for speakers to:

Union Departementale CFDT
7 Rue de Docteur Chaussier
21000 Dijon
France
Fax: 01033 80305752
Telephone: 01033 80304670

Union officials victimised for fighting fascism

By Mark Serwotka, CPSA Rotherham DSS

THE civil service union CPSA has a policy of fighting racism and fascism in the civil service.

When the Sheffield and Rotherham DE branch discovered that they had British National Party Chesterfield organiser Simon Chadwick in their branch, they immediately campaigned for his dismissal.

This led to the Nazi's sacking from the civil service.

You might think that a so-called Equal Opportunities Employer, the Department of Employment, would have been happy to be rid of Chadwick. But no. This is the new breed, the private enterprise style of the '90s.

Management instead took disciplinary action against the entire committee of the local union branch. They were charged with bringing

the Employment Service into disrepute.

14 Branch Executive members have received "final warnings", which will remain on file for five years. Two senior branch officers have been downgraded from EO to Clerical Grades (a pay cut of £3,000), and compulsorily transferred to other offices, in one case over 15 miles away.

Nationally, this unprecedented attack on our activists has been disgracefully ignored by CPSA. Locally, the branch has applied for authority to take action to reinstate the two officers, and to get all disciplinary proceedings dropped. We all need to support any such action. This is an attack on us all.

Messages of support and donations (payable to CPSA DE Group Branch, Sheffield and Rotherham) should be sent to: Branch Secretary, c/o Sheffield Coordinating Centre Against Unemployment, West Street, Sheffield.

The Industrial Front

NALGO members in Manchester Council's Housing Department are to be balloted for a strike over the suspension of two members in the Estate Management section. Following two investigatory hearings, they have now been charged with gross misconduct. The ballot is for an all-out strike in Estate Management if the workers are found guilty.

Management have also threatened to discipline the 100 NALGO members who took one-day action in support of the two workers.

DSS management in East London have backed down over attempts to discipline CPSA rep Tony Reay for not wearing a name badge.

Tony believes that name badges are wrong because their aim is to make DSS workers appear personally responsible for the Tory-created

crisis of the benefits system. As soon as management issued their threats against Tony, local CPSA reps responded by starting preparations for a series of walk-outs and protest strikes.

As a result, national management intervened and instructed local management to negotiate about "alternatives" to name badges. "We are going to tell management that the alternative to name badges is massively increased benefit levels plus more and better-paid staff", said Tony.

SOCIALIST

ORGANISER

Railworkers and miners: Stand firm! Stand together!

By a railworker

AS WE GO TO press the executive of the railworkers' union RMT are meeting to discuss the progress of their joint campaign to defend jobs alongside the miners.

Right wing members of the executive are floating the idea of calling off the strike ballot set for 5 March.

They argue that the "soundings" they have carried out show that the mood for a fight is not there amongst rank and file railworkers.

To say that this is something of a "self-fulfilling prophecy" would be an understatement.

The right wingers in the RMT executive have conducted themselves with breathtaking stupidity since voting to ballot alongside the NUM and NACODS.

They have gagged themselves by refusing to link any of the other issues facing rail workers — privatisation, the pay freeze, and the new machinery of negotiation — to the question of job losses resulting from pit closures.

The good reason for this self-censorship is the anti-union laws — the real reason is that the right wing do not want a fight. Nothing else can explain the terrible way in which they have conducted themselves in the campaign so far.

A poor lead from the top simply reinforces weaknesses and lack of confidence at rank and file level.

The cumulative effect of Knapp's misleadership of the union has been to spread cynicism.

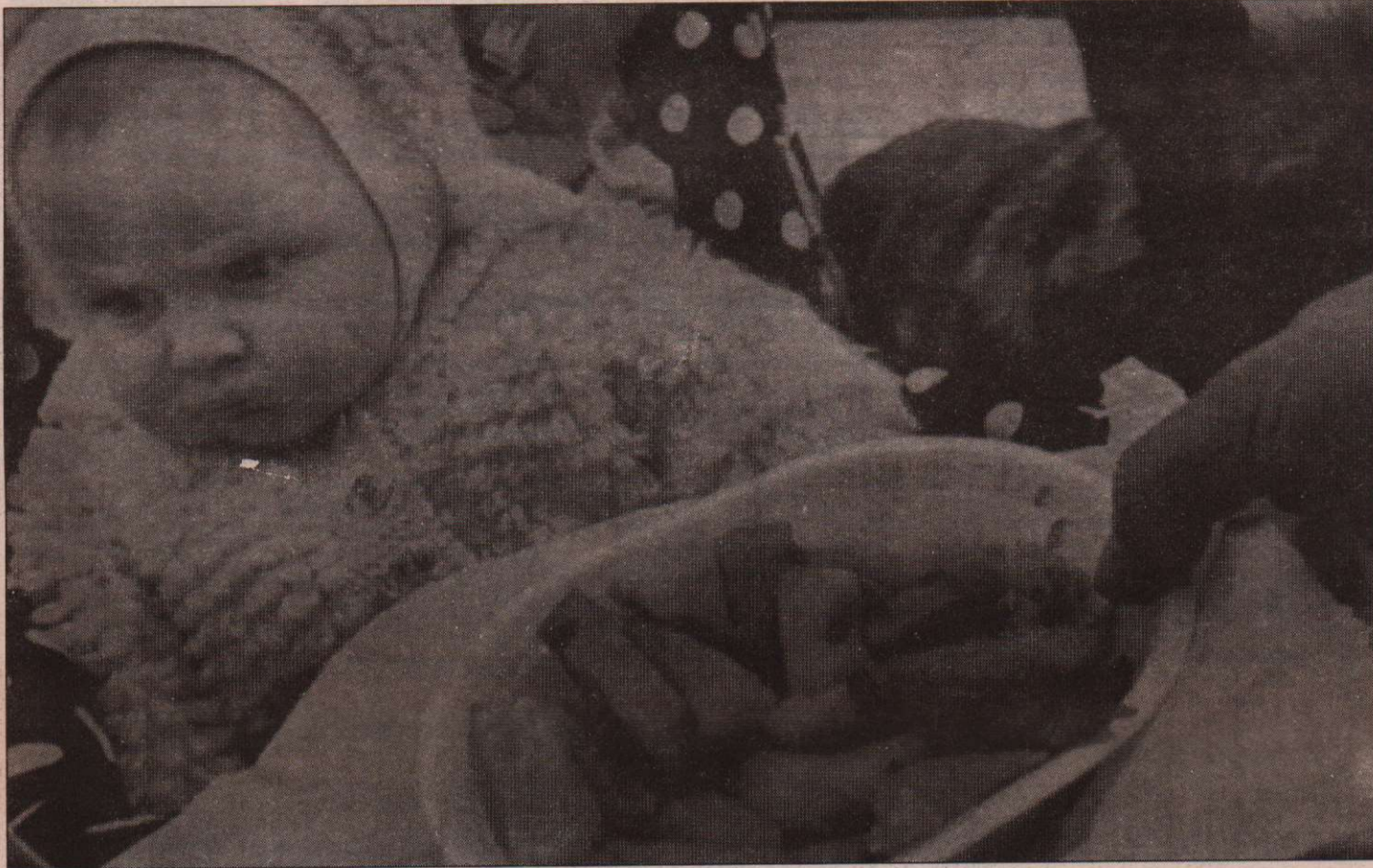
In 1989 railworkers struck for 6 days and won a limited victory. Since then Knapp has surrendered everything we won, and more, without a fight.

That means that though a yes vote is possible it will require hard work and imaginative campaigning.

Knapp and his friends have not tried this. Instead of pressing the panic button and undermining the miners' morale as much as the railworkers, the RMT executive should stand firm.

A climbdown now would be a disaster for both groups of workers from which it would be much more difficult to return.

If the RMT executive want to win the ballot on 5 March then they should be putting over the same message as Arthur Scargill does in the centre pages of this week's SO.



Tories bring back malnutrition

One recent survey by the National Children's Home has estimated that all families on low incomes eat an unhealthy diet and that one in ten of those children under five go without enough to eat at least one day a month. Over half of poor British children eat unhealthy snacks like chips every day. One in five poor parents deny themselves food on a regular basis. Imagine what a 5% increase in food bills will mean for these families. The Tories are bringing back Victorian-style working class malnutrition

Stop the food tax!

By John O'Mahony

A FIVE PER CENT TAX on food - that is the latest class atrocity being floated by the Tories. A Treasury document suggesting the tax has been leaked to the press, and Tory leaders are debating it. If we do not resist the proposal now, then the Tories will be encouraged to proceed with it.

All such taxes hit the poor - and that includes most of the old - in whose budgets food figures larger than in the budgets of the well-off.

There is a terrible contrast between this idea of a 5 per cent food tax, which will hit the poor, and the tax cuts for the rich which have

obsessed the Tory government for the last 14 years. But that is nothing new.

They have cut the taxes of the rich and very much, sometimes by as much as half. They have cut the top rate of tax from 90 per cent to 40 per cent. At the same time, they have doubled VAT - even on takeaway food from the chippie.

Major talks about a "classless Britain", but this is a class-war government. It is government by the rich, for the rich, against the poor and the less well off.

A five per cent tax on food would have a devastating effect on the living standards of millions of people. People who have to skimp on food now would have to skimp even more, and people who eat very badly now would

have to eat even worse.

As yet, it is probably just kite-flying. Much that the Tories have done in the way of savage class legislation during the last 13 years began as kite-flying and is now law because there was not enough opposition, because the Labour Party was led by do-nothing windbags.

Even the poll tax became law: but then a tremendous outcry and a strong campaign forced the Tories to scrap the poll tax. The fate of the Tory poll tax shows what could have been done against the other Tory measures. It shows what can be done now.

The TUC and the Labour Party should start now to organise a loud outcry against this latest Tory idea for bleeding the working class.

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